

MINUTES OF THE STARK COUNTY LAND REUTILIZATION CORPORATION  
November 20, 2023

The Stark County Land Reutilization Corporation met for their regular meeting on Monday, November 20, 2023 at 9:00 a.m. in the Stark County Regional Planning Commission Conference Room.

1. CALL TO ORDER BY SCLRC CHAIRMAN, Alex Zumbar
2. ROLL CALL – Board Members Present

Roll call found the following board members in attendance: Chris Hardesty, Bill Smith, Alex Zumbar, Janet Creighton and John Arnold.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF OCTOBER 16, 2023 MEETING

Arnold moved and Hardesty seconded to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2023 meeting. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Hardesty, Smith, Zumbar, Creighton and Arnold.

4. PUBLIC SPEAKS
5. TREASURER/FISCAL REPORT

Heather Cunningham reviewed the Treasurer's Report for the month of October. Hardesty moved and Smith seconded to approve the Treasurer's Report for October as presented. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Hardesty, Smith, Zumbar, Creighton and Arnold.

a. 2024 Budget Proposal

Cunningham reviewed the details of the proposed 2024 budget. Cunningham noted that she had reached out to Julian & Group to provide a proposal by the next meeting. There was additional discussion regarding the details of the Prosecutor's agreement. Zumbar stated the intention is to approve the budget at the December meeting and have questions answered before that time.

6. SIDE LOT/VACANT LOT PROGRAM REPORT  
**Gwen Arthur provided the Side Lot Program Update:**

**Total Applications Submitted: 2,559**  
*(8 applications were received since October '23 update)*

Cities – 2,115  
Canton: 1,660, Massillon: 184, Alliance: 271

Other Communities – 444

Beach City – 1, Bethlehem Twp – 68, Brewster – 9, Canal Fulton – 1, Canton Twp – 84, East Canton – 7, East Sparta – 2, Hartsville – 3, Jackson Twp – 6, Lake Twp – 8, Lawrence Twp – 12, Lexington Twp – 67, Limaville – 2, Louisville – 2, Marlboro – 1, Meyer's Lake – 1, Minerva – 5, Nimishillen – 6, North Canton – 2; Osnaburg Twp – 15, Paris Twp – 3, Perry Twp – 18, Pike Twp – 21, Plain Twp –

38, Sandy Twp – 41, Sugarcreek Twp – 6, Tuscarawas Twp – 2, Washington Twp – 6, Waynesburg – 6, Wilmot-1

- Total Number of Applications under Preliminary Review: 0
- Total Number of Applications Denied: 962
- Number of Canceled Applications/Fee Refunded: 186
- Total Number Pending Approval by Community: 21
- **Total Number of Approved Applications: 1,385**

- Total Number of Approved Applications Pending Deposit Receipt / NIP Early Lien Release Approval / Request for Foreclosure / Completed Foreclosure Proceeding: 116
- Total Number Being Prepared for Transfer: 28
- **Total Number Transferred to Date: 1,241**

**Vacant Lot Program Update:**

**Total Applications Submitted: 370**

*( Application received since October '23 update)*

Cities – 260: Canton: 213, Alliance: 33, Massillon: 14

Other Communities – 110

Bethlehem Twp – 61, Canton Twp – 13, Hartville – 1, Jackson Twp – 3, Lake – 7, Lexington Twp – 9, Nimishillen – 3, Paris – 1, Perry – 1, Pike – 2, Sandy Twp – 7; Sugarcreek Twp – 1, Washington Twp – 4,

- Total Number of Applications under Preliminary Review: 0
- Total Number of Applications Denied: 255
- Number of Canceled Applications/Fee Refunded: 23
- Total Number Pending Approval by Community: 2
- **Total Number of Approved Applications: 89**

- Total Number of Approved Applications Pending Executed MOU/ Completion of Foreclosure Proceeding: 21
- Total Number Being Prepared for Transfer: 0
- Total Number Transferred to Date: 68

Arnold moved and Creighton seconded to approve the Side Lot/Vacant Lot Report as submitted. Motion carried on a roll call vote as follows: Voting Aye - Hardesty, Smith, Zumbar, Creighton and Arnold.

7. **NEW BUSINESS**

- a. ODOB Programs
  - Building Demolition & Site Revitalization 2024-25 Program

Nau gave updates on the ODOD demolition and brownfield programs. ODOD is funding again the Building Demolition & Site Revitalization program they started last year and also the Brownfield Remediation program. On the demolition program there is \$150 million allocated statewide, and each county gets \$500,000 set-aside for demolition, which is 100% grant money. With 88 counties in Ohio, that will leave \$106 million available for the balance of the State, which will be allocated at 75/25 percent match. We have been soliciting applications which were made available on October 31<sup>st</sup>. The challenge is that they are only accepting one application from the lead entity, which is the Land Bank. The plan is to get together all the entities that are applying for the money, because we only get one submission. There will be subrecipient agreements required with those entities. Eligible projects will be for blighted, vacant and abandoned properties that are not considered brownfields. They will allow asbestos abatement, and a project that involves tearing down any buildings most likely will be dealing with asbestos. Although the deadline to submit applications is April 1<sup>st</sup>, we could actually submit now if we wanted to, but we're trying to cover all bases, so we're considering submitting after the first of the year. It is first come, first serve on the balance of the State funding.

Zumbar stated he attended a conference where the Ohio Land Bank Association had its Director along with conference committee individuals from the Land Bank there, and they discussed this topic. There are seven counties, and he was not sure if Stark County was in that group, but seven counties used up all the money. They had projects to apply for, but if they get it or not is the question. A comment was made to the small counties that if they didn't need the money, then they shouldn't apply for it, because the larger counties do need it. It will be interesting to see how this gets doled out and how the projects are funded. There is a lot more out there that needs to come down, and it will take some creativity. Zumbar thought there was only 66 counties that have a Land Bank. Nau stated he believed it would be challenging for the rural counties.

Nau stated the rules did come out, and an application could be submitted now, but we are still listing the projects that are in the que right now. Because there is no application available to complete, he has told anyone interested to send a letter requesting funding along with a budget. ODOD is saying it's on a first come, first serve basis. Alliance has submitted a letter of interest for four commercial properties with an estimate of \$525,000; Massillon has plans to take some buildings down at the old Massillon hospital at about \$350,000; Stark Parks is wanting to submit Molly Stark at \$3.2 million with the asbestos abatement. They also have buildings at Quail Hollow and Tam O'Shanter that they submitted. The other submittal is from a private company, Sgt. Clean Car Wash, and they want to build a car wash at the former Lake Cable Nursery location. The total demo is for \$184,000, and they submitted their request for \$138,000.

The Land Bank has been designated as the lead entity. According to the regulations, Land Banks are allowed to fund private sector projects, but it would be at the Land Bank's discretion. To date, our demolition assistance program is for governments and nonprofits. It is a policy decision for the Board to make if they want to fund private sector projects. Zumbar stated this Land Bank was established under two sections: 1724 and 5721. It is a special CIC, so we are allowed to get involved in community development for economic development projects, which is the beauty of this Land Bank and the powers that it has. We have been focusing primarily on demolition, remediation and brownfield. But eventually this board needs to possibly get involved with rehabbing and selling properties. The board should be looking at alternate sources of revenue. Eventually all these money sources will dry up. He hoped that in the future good members would follow in the footsteps and the ground work that's been laid.

Nau stated the demo and the brownfield money was funded by the legislature as a special purpose, so it could be a one-time shot. Hardesty asked if this program is for commercial only or is it residential as well. Nau stated it is for both. Rinaldi stated the city of Canton has 87 properties in the queue right now already designated and identified for 2024. The city has 30 already going through the blight process which after 30 days of noncompliance the city controls the property. He could get that submitted immediately. Nau stated some of the decisions that will have to be made is when we should submit the application. He thought after the first of the year the application could be submitted, making sure we are doing our due diligence to solicit applications. The decision will then be who will get 100% money. Last year with this program for the 75/25 match money, the 25 percent match was split two ways: 12 ½% Land Bank and 12 ½ % for the applicant.

Nau stated that the private company, Sgt. Clean, has been anxious about if they might get assistance. He asked the board if they had any thoughts on funding a private entity. Hardesty stated there should be discussion on if commerce is taking place at the location, and what project would be there after they tear it down. Nau stated this property is the former Lake Cable Nursery at Fulton and Sgt. Clean wants to put a car wash there. Creighton stated she would not be in favor of supporting that project. Smith stated this board is already loaded with governmental and non-profit projects. He was not saying he would say no to everything, but that amount of money could go a long way towards demolishing eight or nine houses, and providing a lot more improvement than a car wash. Arnold stated they are putting a car wash by the Myers in North Canton right now too. Arnold stated his feelings were the same about the car wash. Smith stated he was concerned that so many car washes were going up that they may end up being blighted too. He believed there could be other projects that come along that will serve the community better than that. Nau stated the only analogy he could think of is what the Land Bank did for the Hall of Fame. Zubar stated the Hall of Fame also employs many people. Smith stated the Hall of Fame was sitting on that situation for quite some time, and they were all getting phone calls about when that was going to happen. Nau stated he will let them know that the Land Bank is not funding private sector projects. Arnold stated this could be considered on a case by case basis, and this project will not pass the test.

- Brownfield Remediation 2024-25 Program

Nau stated the 2024-25 brownfield program is a continuation of something that was created the last couple of years. What is different with this brownfield is the Land Bank is designated this year as the lead entity, which was not like that in the past. For example, in the past Steve Coon got some brownfield money to do the asbestos abatement at the Reinkert building, and he dealt directly with ODOD. The way they structured this now is that counties that have Land Banks under certain parameters are the lead entity. We will need to submit the grant application to the State, similar to the demolition program. ODOD will make applications available on December 5<sup>th</sup>, and they will be due April 1<sup>st</sup>, which is the same date as the demo money. It is \$175 million statewide for two years; 2024 and 2025. Stark County gets \$1 million set-aside at 100% at least for the first year. That leaves \$82 million for the balance of the State. This is only for brownfields with hazardous substance and petroleum properties. But a Phase I and Phase II Environmental Assessment can also be done with a maximum of \$300,000, and the maximum clean-up is \$10 million. We are hoping to use this to finish the Starfire on Columbus Road. That cost estimate is around \$700,000, and there is still some BUSTR money, so we have to see how that plays out. He didn't have any other projects for this money right now, so we will have to solicit that to see how that goes. The grant money for that at 100% and the balance of the State is 75/25 match. They will go out and solicit, so if anyone has any brownfields that they want to do either an assessment or clean-up for, this would be a good source of funding. Hardesty mentioned a project

the city had on Tuscarawas that could be a brownfield. Jerry Yost stated that in Waynesburg there was a gas station in the middle of town that could be a good project. He knew it was tax delinquent and a nuisance. Nau stated when using both programs, we will need to have a subrecipient agreement in place when we apply for the money. Zumber stated that anyone having a potential project should pass that information to Nau to get a list compiled and see what could be eligible.

8. OLD BUSINESS

a. Auction of 12777 Mogadore Ave., Uniontown Update

Nau stated the auction on the Mogadore property is November 24<sup>th</sup> at noon. Jeff Kiko with Kiko Auctioneers had informed him they had received inquiries if there was a *No Further Action* (NFA) letter on the property. The *VAP, covenant not to sue*, and the *NFA* letter are all Ohio EPA programs. The US EPA and the Ohio EPA are totally separate entities and they have their own programs. The clean up on the property was done under the emergency remedial action program, which was funded by the US EPA. The property was cleaned up to US EPA standards, and all the documentation of that clean-up was disclosed to any perspective buyers. There was additional discussion on the clean up that did occur on the property.

9. NEXT MEETING - Monday, December 18, 2023 - 9:00 a.m.

10. ADJOURNED