

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY  
MEETING MINUTES  
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2009  
7:30 A.M. – LINCOLN CENTER HEARING ROOM**

Members Present: Timothy Devanney, Chair      Robert Schneider  
Barbara Weinberg      Thomas Tomko  
Gerald Cope      Aaron Wlochowski  
Michael Darby      Aaron Ansaldi  
Susan O'Connor      Gary Sweet

Also Present: Scott Shanley, General Manager  
Mark Pellegrini, Director of Neighborhood Services  
and Economic Development  
Gary Anderson, Senior Planner

Adoption of Minutes of August 27, 2009

Mr. Sweet moved to adopt the August 27, 2009 minutes as written. Mr. Darby seconded the motion and all members voted in favor.

Adoption of the Broad Street Redevelopment Plan

Mr. Darby moved to adopt the Redevelopment Plan as outlined in the resolution distributed by staff. Mr. Wlochowski seconded the motion.

Mr. Darby moved to suspend the reading of the resolution because members had printed copies. Mr. Sweet seconded the motion and all members voted in favor. The resolution follows:

WHEREAS, the Redevelopment Agency of the Town of Manchester in conjunction with the staff of the Planning Department has conducted an extensive study of the Broad Street area of the Town of Manchester and prepared a plan of redevelopment, entitled "Broad Street Redevelopment Plan" dated September 17, 2009; and

WHEREAS, the Manchester Planning and Zoning Commission at its meeting of August 12, 2009 found that the Redevelopment Plan was consistent with the Town Plan of Conservation and Development and issued a written opinion to that effect; and

WHEREAS, the Housing Authority of the Town of Manchester, by action taken on August 12, 2009 supported the Redevelopment Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

1. The Redevelopment Agency of the Town of Manchester makes the following findings:

A. The area proposed in the Plan for redevelopment and described in Part I of the Plan qualifies as a redevelopment area based on the deteriorating and substandard conditions of the land and buildings within the area; and

B. Carrying out the Redevelopment Plan will materially improve conditions in the redevelopment area by eliminating blight, improving infrastructure, and creating or improving recreational assets; and

D. There is no residential land use or occupancy in the redevelopment area, no displacement will occur, and no relocation will be necessary; and

E. The concept plans included in the Redevelopment Plan are satisfactory as to site planning and in relationship to the Plan of Conservation and Development adopted by the Town of Manchester pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §8-23; and

F. Public benefits resulting from the Redevelopment Plan include the elimination of blight, the improvement of infrastructure, the expansion or creation of recreational assets, increased housing options, reduced automobile dependence, the creation of a sense of place, environmental and health benefits and the promotion of a sense of community and will outweigh the private benefit to accrue to any individual private property owner in the redevelopment area; and

G. The existing uses of those properties identified for potential acquisition cannot be feasibly integrated into the Redevelopment Plan due to either deteriorated physical conditions or obsolete site layouts, building types and floor plans; and

H. Acquisition of identified properties in the Redevelopment Plan by eminent domain, if required, is reasonably necessary to implement the Redevelopment Plan; and

I. The Redevelopment Plan is not for the primary purpose of increasing local tax revenues, but to replace existing blighted conditions with a vibrant, attractive place with a mix of uses and activities where people of all ages will choose to live, work and play; and

2. The Redevelopment Agency of the Town of Manchester hereby approves the Broad Street Redevelopment Plan dated September 17, 2009.

Ms. Weinberg asked what the procedure was once the Agency had adopted the plan. Mr. Shanley said once the plan is adopted it will be sent to the Board of Directors for their approval. He said if the plan is adopted by the Agency the Board of Directors would hold a special meeting on the plan on Tuesday, September 22, 2009 at 7:00 p.m. in the Lincoln Center Hearing Room.

Ms. O'Connor asked if, under the section including public benefits of the plan, the creation of jobs should be added as an additional benefit. Mr. Pellegrini said the benefits were included to align with State statutory requirements and job creation is not one of those benefits. The Agency agreed to leave the wording as written.

Mr. Sweet asked staff why letter V regarding the possible use of eminent domain of step 2 was taken out of the implementation section from the previous draft edits. Mr. Anderson explained staff felt letter V reiterated what was included in step 3 and felt it was unnecessary. Mr. Pellegrini added step 5 examined the use of eminent domain which the Agency wanted included as a last resort in step 3.

Mr. Schneider moved the question.

All members present voted in favor of the Redevelopment Plan's approval. The vote was 10 in favor and 0 opposed.

### Other Business

Mr. Darby said at the public hearing of September 3 one speaker referenced a possible conflict of interest for an Agency member. He said he guessed this comment was directed at Mr. Tomko who works for the Zinsser Agency, which is currently marketing the property at 305 Broad Street. Mr. Darby said he wanted to reiterate that Mr. Tomko brought this to the Agency's attention when the Agency first began discussing the Broad Street plan. The Agency is well aware of Mr. Tomko's professional involvement with the property and the Agency expects Mr. Tomko will recuse himself from any discussion or vote related to that property.

Mr. Cope said he was asked by Director Peak to appear on Director Peak's cable public access program as a candidate for Town Clerk. He said filming took place directly after he was asked to appear and he was not able to let the Agency know about this beforehand. During the interview, he was asked questions about the Redevelopment Plan. He said his appearance on the show was not meant in any way as a partisan act and he has enjoyed his time working as an Agency member in a non-partisan fashion. He apologized to the Agency if his appearance on the show was at all seen as a partisan act.

Mr. Devaney reminded the Agency that any request for an interview or public appearance should be directed to the Chairman and/or the Vice-chairman. Mr. Darby reiterated that if any Agency member is asked about their feelings on the referendum question regarding the Broad Street redevelopment area, members should state they are speaking personally and not on behalf of the Agency. Ms. Weinberg expressed concern that the Agency does not become political in that members should keep the focus on the redevelopment project and not on the referendum. Mr. Sweet added the Redevelopment Plan is a good plan and Agency members should stick to talking about the plan itself.

Mr. Tomko suggested all members of the Agency who are able should attend the Board of Director's meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. He encouraged the Chairman and Vice-chairman to emphasize the lengthy process the Redevelopment Agency has undergone in drafting and approving the plan and the fact the Agency listened carefully to the public and incorporated many of their ideas into the plan. He said it is now time to shift from the planning stage to the implementation stage.

Mr. Sweet suggested it might be practical to sit down with members of the Board of Directors and outline the details of the plan. Although some members felt this would be helpful, the Agency agreed there was not time enough before the meeting on September 22<sup>nd</sup> to schedule

such a presentation but Agency members are welcome and encouraged to contact individual members of the Board of Directors to see if they have questions or concerns about the plan.

Ms. Weinberg advised the Chairman and Vice-chair to keep the presentation brief and Mr. Darby expressed the need to keep the approval of the plan separate from the referendum.

There was some discussion on the Agency's role in presenting the plan to various groups in Town. Mr. Pellegrini said the Agency could actively contact various groups and offer to present the plan. The Agency could also contact the editorial board of the Journal Inquirer and Hartford Courant to discuss the plan. Mr. Tomko noted any positive press about the redevelopment plan will help attract private investment to the area.

Mr. Pellegrini said he spoke with Assistant Town Attorney O'Neil regarding how best the Agency members could handle questions on the referendum. Attorney O'Neil said the Agency cannot advocate for or against the referendum question. However individual members can advocate a position as a private citizen. Mr. Sweet suggested relating questions about the referendum to the timetable for plan implementation. If the referendum passes, it would simply move the timetable forward. If it does not pass, the Agency will still be working to implement the plan but on a different timetable.

Mr. Pellegrini said staff will draft and send a transmittal memo to the Board of Directors along with the adopted plan.

Mr. Sweet encouraged the Agency to start working immediately on step one of the plan to send a message that the Agency intends to move forward. Mr. Pellegrini said the immediate steps would be to package a group of incentives with the Board of Directors, draft zoning regulations for the form-based overlay zone, and continue contact with the current owners of the Parkade and potential developers. The Agency asked staff to contact the current Parkade owners and any developers that have expressed interest and ask if they would be willing to sit down and meet with the team assigned to represent the Agency. The purpose of the meeting would be to get to know the parties involved and find out their thoughts regarding the Broad Street plan and their property. Mr. Pellegrini said staff will contact those parties and ask if they are interested in having such a meeting.

Mr. Pellegrini said the drafting of the zoning regulations will require additional technical expertise and he would like to have consultants experienced in drafting this type of zoning work with the planning department, the Agency, and the Planning and Zoning Commission. He said having a draft of the overlay zone prepared for January in preparation for its adoption by the Planning and Zoning Commission in March is an ambitious but possible timeline.

Ms. O'Connor asked Agency members if they would like the Chamber to host a presentation of the Agency on the plan and the Agency agreed.

The meeting adjourned at 9:00 a.m. The next meeting of the Manchester Redevelopment Agency will take place on **Thursday, October 1, 2009 at 7:30 a.m. in the Lincoln Center Hearing Room.**