

**City of Syracuse**  
**Industrial Development Agency**  
201 East Washington Street, 6<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Syracuse, NY 13202  
Tel (315) 473-3275

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Minutes  
Board of Directors Meeting  
Tuesday April 16, 2019

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**Board Members Present:** Kenneth Kinsey, Kathleen Murphy, Rickey Brown, Steven Thompson.

**Via Tele Conference:** Michael Frame.

**Staff Present:** Honora Spillane, Sue Katzoff, Esq., Judith DeLaney, John Vavonese, Debra Ramsey-Burns.

**Others Present:** Aggie Lane, Anthony Dipeso, Wendy Riccelli, Lauryn LaBourde, Rich Puchalski, Bob Wilmott, Stephanie Pasquale.

**Media:** Rick Moriarty

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**I. Public Hearing**

**Seneca Armory Associates LLC**

Mr. Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 8:00 a.m. and asked Ms. Spillane to read verbatim the Notice of Public Hearing on the Project. A copy of the notice is attached and included in the minutes.

After Ms. Spillane read the notice, Mr. Thompson asked if anyone in attendance wished to speak in favor of the Project. Anthony Dipeso the owner spoke in favor of the project and provided a copy of his remarks which are here included: *Hello Everyone. My name is Anthony Di Peso and I am one of the owners of the Seneca Building. I grew up in the area and am a graduate of LeMoyne College and understand the significance of Armory Square and downtown Syracuse. You can imagine my excitement upon purchasing this building as we now would own a special part of Armory Square and a location I know very well because of Mully's Bar. Our project The Seneca Building Renovation is the renovation of 19,000 SF on the vacant 2nd and 3rd floors of the building. We are converting the space into 20 apartments. We also just completed renovations to the retail space on Fayette St and signed a commercial long term tenant. Mully's Bar as previously mentioned is also part of our building and currently under a long term lease. Another part of this project is to renovate the vacant retail space in our building on Walton St to be better suitable for a future long term commercial tenant. For 2 years since purchasing the property we tried to market and renovate the upstairs existing office space. Unfortunately, the layout didn't meet modern office space standards and we were left with the only choice of renovating to create apartments as the building is and would continue to be vacant. This renovation will be very costly because the building is currently in the This project will create jobs and boost the economy. Construction will bring close to 100 jobs over a 12-month period. When our vacant space on Walton St is occupied there will be the potential of over 40 new jobs created depending on the potential tenant. Our new apartment renters will help the downtown economy as well. Our demographic is young professionals who will be working, living, and spending their money downtown.*

*We fully believe that with your help with this project it will be a success for everyone involved and for the future of downtown Syracuse. Thank you.*

Mr. Thompson then asked if anyone else wish to speak in favor of the project. No one spoke. Mr. Thompson asked one last time if anyone wish to speak in favor of the project. No one else spoke in favor of the project..

Mr. Thompson then asked if anyone wish to speak in opposition of the project.

Aggie Lane from Urban Jobs Task Force spoke in opposition to the Project. Ms. Lane provided a copy of her remarks which are here included: *Through SIDA, the Urban Jobs Task Force would like the city to begin investing in the people who live here in the city's neighborhoods. One possible way is for developers to spend 20% of the project's construction wages by hiring Syracuse Build trainees. And every percentage missed, pay a percentage of the tax break to a SIDA fund earmarked for Syracuse Build Training. For example, the Seneca Armory's project is hoping to get tax exemptions worth \$121,000. To complete the project, the developers report that they will be paying about \$544,000.00 in construction wages. Twenty percent of those wages would be \$108,825. If the developer only pays 10% or \$54,400 to Syracuse Build trainees they would then pay 10% of the value of their tax exemption (~\$12,000) into a training fund for Syracuse Build. This should not be seen as a penalty. Besides renovating our buildings we need to be investing in the city's human capital. It is only right and fair! Of course, this change will require reporting with the package like LCP Tracker. LCP Tracker would also keep projects honest. I am hearing that the project at 300 Washington, across from city hall, hired construction workers outside of the six- county region, which is not allowed. Without a monitoring package, the city and its people can be taken advantage of. Thank you. I would like to submit my statement into the minutes, hopefully for later consideration by the board.*

Mr. Thompson then asked if anyone else wished to speak against the project.

Mr. Puchalski of Syracuse United Neighbors also spoke in opposition. He expressed concern that the Agency continued to give breaks to downtown properties when the neighborhoods continued to suffer. He noted a number of properties held by the Land Bank continued to boarded up and requested the Agency do something to assist with the problem.

Bob Wilmott who identified himself as a member of the Carpenters Union said he was not speaking for or against the project. Instead he requested the Agency require certified payrolls from Project owners received tax benefits. He said he believed that some Projects were paying under the table wages and hiring out of the six county area.

Mr. Thompson then asked an additional two times is anyone else in attendance wished to speak in opposition to the Project. No one else spoke. Mr. Thompson closed the Public Hearing at 8:15 a.m.

### **Alan Byer Auto Sales Inc.**

Mr. Thompson opened the Public Hearing at 8:15 a.m. and asked Ms. Spillane to read verbatim the Notice of Public Hearing on the Project. A copy of the notice is attached and included in the minutes.

After Ms. Spillane read the notice, Mr. Thompson asked if anyone in attendance wished to speak in favor of the project. No one spoke. He then asked again an additional two times if anyone wished to speak in favor of the project. No one spoke in favor of the project.

Mr. Thompson asked if anyone wished to speak in opposition of the project.

Rich Puchalski of Syracuse United Neighbors spoke in opposition noting the number of vacant Land Bank properties in the neighborhoods. He requested SIDA “spread the wealth around”.

Mr. Thompson then asked an additional two times if anyone else present wished to speak in opposition to the project. No one else spoke.

Mr. Thompson closed the Public Hearing at 8:20a.m.

## **II. Call Meeting to Order**

Mr. Thompson called the meeting to order at 8:20 a.m.

## **III. Roll Call**

Mr. Thompson noted the Board members present and acknowledged Mr. Frame present via teleconference in Albany, NY.

## **IV. Proof of Notice**

Mr. Thompson noted notice of the meeting had been timely and properly provided for both locations.

## **V. Minutes**

Mr. Thompson asked for a motion approving the minutes from the March 19, 2019 Board of Directors meeting.

Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED THE MINUTES FROM THE MARCH 19, 2019 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING.**

## **VI. New Business**

### **Seneca Armory Associates LLC**

Ms. Katzoff noting a Public Hearing had just concluded on the project requested the Board members consider resolutions to approve it. She said the first resolution was for SEQRA and advised the Agency would declare itself as “Lead Agency” and after review determined there was no significant effect on the environment.

There being no discussion Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Murphy made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY**

**APPROVED A RESOLUTION CLASSIFYING A CERTAIN PROJECT AS AN UNLISTED ACTION PURSUANT TO THE STATE ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY REVIEW ACT, DECLARING THE AGENCY LEAD AGENCY FOR PURPOSES OF AN UNCOORDINATED REVIEW THEREUNDER AND DETERMINING THAT THE ACTION WILL NOT HAVE A SIGNIFICANT EFFECT ON THE ENVIRONMENT.**

Ms. Katzoff then asked the Board to consider an Inducement resolution for the Project. Noting a cost benefit analysis was included in the Board's agenda packet, she said the owner was requesting benefits from the Agency in the form of exemptions from mortgage tax (\$20,813.00) and sales tax (\$100,000.00). There is no request for a PILOT.

Mr. Kinsey asked about how many jobs would be created. Ms. Katzoff responded the Company stated it would be retaining 18 with an additional 17 new jobs to be created.

Mr. Thompson asked for a clarification on the project cost. Ms. DeLaney confirmed the Project cost listed on the cost benefit analysis of \$2,872,400 was the correct number. She noted the number on the executive summary of \$4,025,000 was incorrect as that included the acquisition of the building which is not part of this project.

There being no other questions, Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve the resolution.

Ms. Murphy made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **MR. THOMPSON, MS. MURPHY, AND MR. FRAME VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE RESOLUTION. MR. KINSEY VOTED AGAINST THE RESOLUTION. MR. BROWN ABSTAINED. THE RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED BY A 3 TO 1 VOTE WITH ON ABSTENTION.**

Ms. Katzoff then asked the Board to consider a Final resolution for the project.

There being no discussion, Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Murphy made the motion. Mr. Frame seconded the motion. **MR. THOMPSON, MS. MURPHY, AND MR. FRAME VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE RESOLUTION. MR. KINSEY VOTED AGAINST THE RESOLUTION. MR. BROWN ABSTAINED. THE RESOLUTION WAS APPROVED BY A 3 TO 1 VOTE WITH ON ABSTENTION.**

**Commonspace Warren, LLC**

Ms. Katzoff told the members the Company had advised the Agency of a change in the scope of its Project and was requesting the Board approve a resolution amending the changes. She said the changes included the construction of an additional eleven residential units and the elimination of some planned office space. She noted the cost of the Project was now estimated to \$12,114,112.00. There will be no change in employment numbers. To accommodate the changes the Company is requesting an increase in its mortgage tax exemption and sales tax exemption for a total of \$32,714.00.

Ms. Spillane noted the space was part of the Co-Works space that is filled to capacity each day.

After a brief discussion Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Ms. Murphy made the motion. Mr. Kinsey seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING AN AMENDMENT TO A PROJECT PREVIOUSLY UNDERTAKEN BY THE AGENCY.**

## **Rezone Syracuse Implementations**

Ms. Spillane advised the Board a request had been received from the City of Syracuse to fund a phase of the implementation and marketing of the City's Rezone Syracuse project. She said the Board would be authorizing a contact with Clarion Associates in an amount not to exceed \$80,000.00 to assist in the implementation. She reminded the Board that the Agency's 2019 budget had included a line for this expense.

She then introduced Owen Kerney , the City's Assistant Director of Zoning & Planning to address the Board..

Mr. Kerney the Project leader for Rezone Syracuse said the City and its consultants have been working on the Project for over three years in an effort to update the City's Zoning ordinances to bring them current and "user friendly".

Clarion Associates will work to create an administrative manual, prepare new development applications and provide service to evaluate the ordinance's performance over a period of a year.

After a brief discussion Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to approve the resolution. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING A CONTRACT WITH CLARION ASSOCIATES IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED \$80,000.00 TO ASSIST IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CITY'S "REZONE PROJECT".**

## **VII. Executive Session**

Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to go into Executive session at 8:45 a.m., to discuss legal matters. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. . **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN TO EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:00 A.M.**

A motion to adjourn from Executive Session was made by Ms. Murphy. Mr. Kinsey seconded. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION AT 9:00 A.M.**

## **VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Thompson asked for a motion to adjourn. Mr. Kinsey made the motion. Mr. Brown seconded the motion. **ALL BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED A MOTION TO ADJOURN.**