

SYRACUSE URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY

Meeting Minutes

I, PAUL DRISCOLL, do hereby certify as follows:

1. I am the duly designated and acting Secretary of the Syracuse Urban Renewal Agency (the "Agency").
2. I attended a regular meeting of the Agency, held in the Conference Room of the Mayor's Office at City Hall, Syracuse, New York on the 27th day of August.
3. The meeting was convened at approximately 3:01 p.m., and a duly constituted quorum consisting of Mayor Stephanie A. Miner, Common Council President Van Robinson and Commissioner of Finance David DeVecchio were present throughout. In addition to myself, Assistant Corporation Counsel Thomas Babilon, Director of Planning and Sustainability Andrew Maxwell, Deputy Commissioner of Neighborhood and Business Development Stephanie Pasquale, Preservation Planner and Public Art Coordinator Kate Auwaerter and Assistant City Planner Susannah Bartlett were present.

Resolution No. 3254

Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon introduced Resolution 3254 to the Board. Resolution No. 3254 authorizes the disposal of 1501 and 1503 South Salina Street for less than fair market value and to the highest recorded bidder: Syracuse IV Star Redevelopment, LLC (hereinafter the "Bidder"). The Bidder's application requests that 1501 and 1503 South Salina Street will be disposed of by a fifteen (15) year lease with a fifteen (15) year renewal period, with rent set at \$1 for the term and additional rent to include any improvements and real property taxes or charges attributable to either property.

Commissioner Paul Driscoll noted that the auction was held on August 26, 2013 (the day before the August SURA Board Meeting). Common Council President Van Robinson inquired after the details of the properties and Commissioner Driscoll explained that 1501 and 1503 South Salina Street are vacant lots adjacent to the forty-five (45) unit 'ElJay' apartment complex located at 1445 South Salina Street. 1501 and 1503 South Salina Street will be used as parking for the tenants of 1445 South Salina Street.

Following the introduction and discussion of this resolution, Commissioner of Finance David DeVecchio made a motion to authorize this resolution, which was seconded by Common Council President Van Robinson. Resolution No. 3255 was therefore unanimously adopted.

Resolution No. 3255

Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon introduced Resolution 3255 to the Board. Resolution No. 3255 authorizes the disposal of 618 West Brighton Avenue for less than fair market value and to the highest recorded bidder: Jean D. Bucknor (hereinafter the "Bidder").

Common Council President Van Robinson asked for an explanation of the pricing. Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon explained that SURA is permitted to sell 618 West Brighton Avenue (hereinafter the "Property") for half of the property's appraised value or appraised value minus the amount to rehabilitate the property; whichever amount is more. The Property appraised at \$13,000 and was sold to the Bidder for \$6,500. Babilon also mentioned that the property was donated to SURA.

Following the introduction and discussion of this resolution, Common Council President Van Robinson made a motion to authorize this resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner of Finance David DelVecchio. Resolution No. 3255 was therefore unanimously adopted.

Resolution No. 3256

Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon introduced Resolution 3256 to the Board. Resolution No. 3256 authorizes the procurement of appraisal services from Wicker Appraisal Associates, Inc. for two commercial vacant lots located at 729 and 731 Marcellus Street.

Mayor Stephanie Miner asked whether we have had any interest in the properties. Assistant Planner 1 Susannah Bartlett listed Raymond M. Rinaldi of Golden Gloves as a prospective purchaser.

Following the introduction and discussion of this resolution, Common Council President Van Robinson made a motion to authorize this resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner of Finance David DelVecchio. Resolution No. 3256 was therefore unanimously adopted.

Resolution No. 3257

Preservation Planner and Public Art Coordinator Kate Auwaerter introduced Resolution 3257 to the Board. Resolution No. 3257 authorizes the use of Perseverance Park (hereinafter the "Park") for a Food Truck Roundup (hereinafter the "Event"). Specialty food trucks will rally on the Park from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, September 19, 2013. The Event's concept has been successful in other communities, it hopes to create interest in downtown and, most importantly, hopes to start a conversation with the community about the Park and its future. The Park is currently vacant in a pivotal part of Downtown. Auwaerter would like the City's Parks Department to sponsor and insure the Event as the Downtown Committee will not.

Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon notes that although the food trucks would hold individual insurance, the Park itself would not be insured. Babilon also notes that the Mobile Vendor Ordinance may not apply to this event.

Mayor Stephanie Miner confirmed with Auwaeter that the Event is three hours in duration and suggested to the Board that they authorize Resolution No. 3257.

Babilon also voiced concern regarding the egress and ingress of the property and whether the Event would have someone to direct traffic. Auwaeter suggested the Park's East Fayette Street curb cut as the egress/ingress and Mayor Miner notes that the Contracting Officer (Commissioner Paul Driscoll) has the authority to determine the details of the event. Commissioner Driscoll asked for a confirmation of who the sponsor of the Event would be and Mayor Miner suggested that it be whoever the most appropriate party is and that that decision can also be left to the Contracting Officer.

Following the introduction discussion of this resolution, Common Council President Van Robinson made a motion to authorize this resolution, which was seconded by Commissioner of Finance David DelVecchio. Resolution No. 3257 was therefore unanimously adopted.

Resolution No. 3258

Assistant Corporation Counsel Tom Babilon introduced Resolution 3258 to the Board. Resolution No. 3258 designates Jubilee Homes of Syracuse, Inc. (hereinafter "Jubilee") as a qualified and eligible sponsor for the Jubilee Supermarket Project.

Commissioner Paul Driscoll explains that Jubilee has provided SURA with site plans but no proof of financing. Mayor Stephanie Miner suggests to the Board that they do not designate Jubilee as a qualified and eligible sponsor until SURA is provided with the necessary documentation. Common Council President Van Robinson agrees that the Board should hold this resolution.

Commissioner Driscoll asks whether Jubilee should submit a single offer with a single property deposit or if Jubilee should submit eighteen (18) applications and deposits. Mayor Miner states that when Jubilee provides SURA with the necessary documentation, then SURA will begin to looking into possible ways of minimizing costs.

Resolution No. 3258 was held.

Items for Discussion

Adjacent Owner Vacant lot Purchase Incentives

Commissioner Paul Driscoll would like to begin a conversation with the Board on how to make SURA's inventory of vacant lots more attractive to potential owners. Commissioner Driscoll suggests offering incentive to adjacent property owners (to be provided by SURA's budget). These incentives could provide purchasers with funds for site improvement or could lessen the cost of acquiring a survey and re-subdividing the property. Commissioner Driscoll suggested the amount of \$1,500 worth of incentives per vacant lot.

Common Council President Van Robinson asked what generally holds adjacent owners back from purchasing the property and Commissioner Driscoll lists the fear of escalating taxes as a main concern. Therefore, having incentive that will lessen the costs for new owners to survey and re-subdivide the lot will aid in debunking this concern as it will provide new owners with a specific amount of taxed increase.

Common Council President Robinson asks the general price to survey and re-subdivide a vacant lot. Mayor Miner lists \$1,000. Commissioner Driscoll suggests to the Board that the City's Engineering Department could potential be a part of this incentive program. Mayor Miner advises against this as the City's Engineering Department is already overwhelmed.

Common Council President Robinson suggests that we search for a Surveyor that could offer a 'group deal.' Assistant Corporation Council Tom Babilon sites the inability to predict which adjacent owners will show interest as a problem when searching for a 'group deal' surveyor. It is suggested that letters be sent to adjacent owners to determine potential interest. Assistant Planner 1 Susannah Bartlett tells the Board that letters were sent to all tax current, adjacent owners to SURA's vacant residential lots and there was only one reply.

Mayor Miner suggests that these properties should be given to the Land Bank as the Land Bank will have the revenue and man power to actively dispose of these properties.

Property Insurance

Commissioner Paul Driscoll explains that other entities similar to SURA (such as SIDA) have figured out a way to insure their properties. However Commissioner DeVecchio explains that most insurance companies, upon learning that SURA is affiliated with the City, back away.

Mayor Stephanie Miner inquires whether SURA has a Colorable Claim and asks Assistant Corporation Council Tom Babilon to look into the details.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:31 p.m.

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By: 
Paul Driscoll, Secretary