

The Board of Directors of the Urban Redevelopment Agency met for their Regular meeting on Wednesday, February 14, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. at Harlem City Hall with Chairman John Neal presiding.

Present: BOARD: Chairman John Neal, Director Robert Culpepper, Director Renee Dean, Director Hope Hodge, and Director Steve Pokrywka; STAFF: City Manager Debra Moore, Community Development Director Robert Fields, City Clerk Leona Holley, and City Attorney Adam Nelson; GUEST: Mayor Roxanne Whitaker.

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Neal at 9:03 a.m.

The Invocation was given by City Attorney Nelson.

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Chairman Neal.

Approval of the Agenda: Director Dean made the motion to approve the Agenda as presented; 2nd by Director Hodge. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Neal, and Pokrywka voting in the affirmative.

Approval of the Minutes: Director Dean made the motion to approve the minutes of the January 10, 2024 Regular Meeting; 2nd by Director Culpepper. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Neal, and Pokrywka voting in the affirmative.

Chairman Neal welcomed Director Steve Pokrywka to the Urban Redevelopment Agency.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Mayor Roxanne Whitaker – Mayor Whitaker commented two people has reached out to her on the San Saba property and the realtor is changing on the property. Mayor Whitaker reported the Harlem Merchants Association is getting ready to start their monthly events and festivals downtown. This past Saturday Impact Church had an event, and the downtown area was crowded. Mayor Whitaker commented that the new coffee shop, Christie’s Coffee has opened. Mayor Whitaker gave an update on the Georgia Legislature.

REPORTS:

Staff Report – Robert Fields: Mr. Fields reported on the following projects and potential development interest in Harlem:

- O’Reilly’s Auto Parts has completed their design of the building, and staff should be receiving the design soon. Once this comes in, this will go to the Historic Preservation Commission because of a structure on the property. According to the historical survey this was the homesite of Doctor George Sanders. The property is at 370 W. Milledgeville Road.
- Dominos’ Pizza has expressed an interest in Harlem. They are interested in a couple of properties.

REPORTS (cont'd):

Staff Report – Robert Fields (cont'd):

- Heritage Ridge is getting ready to start, they are just waiting for dryer weather. They are hoping to start the realignment of the water line with the widening of the deceleration lane this coming Monday. Commercial property will start first.
- Bowdre Street Townhomes has been pushed back due to the weather. They have to redesign their detention pond and the weather has held up progress.
- Harlem Mini Storage had to make an addendum to their plans; this has been approved and they have started working on the project.

Staff Report – Debra Moore:

- Touch of Life Massage, 220 N. Louisville Street – Since the roof was replaced on the building, the tenant has noticed a sewer odor inside the building. Public Works Director Octavious Beard reached out to Crosby Roofing and Coleman Plumbing. There is a possibility the issue could be with the hot water heater because of the hot water sitting so long without use. Coleman Plumbing has given a quote of \$1,750.00 to do a smoke test to find the source of the odor and to replace the 40-gallon water heater. Director Pokrywka commented that if the hot water is not being used, over time you could get a “rotten egg” smell or if something is blocking the vent from the roof this could be a separate issue, will not know until it is looked at.

Director Culpepper made the motion to authorize Director Pokrywka to investigate the issue at 220 N. Louisville Street, to report back to the City Manager Moore the findings and to authorize the City Manager Moore to negotiate and to approve a contract for repairs of the property at 220 N. Louisville Street up to the amount of \$1,750.00; 2nd by Director Hodge. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Neal, and Pokrywka voting in the affirmative.

- Walking Trail - looking at installing signage at the Walking Trail. This signage will be similar to the City's Welcome signs.
- The City has taken back over the maintenance for the Harlem City Park as of January 1, 2024. The fields will be leased out to teams for practices. A meeting is set up next week with JAL design services to discuss upgrades to the park.

Directors Reports: Director Culpepper commented the city looked very pretty at Christmas, the decorations were well done, and the Public Works Department did a good job. Director Culpepper stated he is very proud of the city. Director Culpepper inquired about why there is yellow caution tape at the access point from the cemetery to the City Park; City Manager Moore replied she is unsure why the tape was placed there. Mayor Whitaker said that at one of the access entrances from the cemetery to the park, cars are driving over the walking track, causing damage to it. Mayor Whitaker stated she does not think the one access point needs to be used because of the damage it is doing to the walking track. Chairman Neal explained the reason the access points were installed was another way for cars to leave the cemetery after funerals, cars were getting blocked in the cemetery because the streets are so narrow and to have

UNFINISHED BUSINESS (cont'd):

Directors Reports (cont'd): parking at the park if needed. Chairman Neal stated at the last cemetery meeting there was discussion if stop signs could be placed at the access points from the cemetery to the park. Chairman Neal asked if this would be the city or the cemetery committee responsibility; City Manager Moore responded she does not know how you would make the determination because they are not roads.

Back Paddle Brewing – Update: City Manager Moore reported the 90-day diligence period was to end in January with an additional 30 days to set up the closing date with Back Paddle Brewery. City Manager Moore reached out to Kyle McCloud, around February 1st. Mr. McCloud stated he had a phone call scheduled with his bank on February 5th to see how things were progressing and about getting a set closing date. City Manager Moore reached out to him at the end of last week asking him to attend today's meeting. Mr. McCloud responded yesterday and apologized for not getting back with her and said he had been out of the country for work. Mr. McCloud stated the bank had sent him some forms for him to forward to the investors and he was waiting on the investors to send the forms back to him so he could get them to the bank, and this delayed the process. The bank is working on scheduling Environmental testing prior to closing. The Board members discussed how long the process has taken, and there are concerns about it being almost two years. City Attorney Nelson explained when the URA entered into the agreement there was no earnest money put down, the URA could be losing other opportunities if someone else wants to develop the property. City Attorney Nelson explained the negotiation process for an extension of time and earnest money for an amendment to the agreement. After no further discussion, Director Culpepper made the motion to amend purchase agreement with Back Paddle Brewing, LLC to extend closing period for 60 days from execution by purchaser, to require a non-refundable earnest payment in the amount of \$10,000.00 to be applied to purchase price, and to extend URA's consent to such amendment until 3/12/2024; 2nd by Director Pokrywka. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Neal, and Pokrywka voting in the affirmative.

NEW BUSINESS: None.

Other: Director Culpepper inquired if the city is moving ahead with the sewer easement for the Durst property; City Manager Moore replied she has not had a recent conversation with Mr. Martinez on the easement. Director Culpepper stated he had conversations with the realtor for Jordan Trotter Realty, they have tried to reach out to the Thornton's on their property but have not had good responses. Director Culpepper stated we need to move ahead with the sewer easement.

Executive Session: N/A

With there being no further items for discussion, Director Culpepper made the motion to adjourn the meeting; 2nd by Director Dean. The motion carried with Directors Culpepper, Dean, Hodge, Neal, and Pokrywka voting in the affirmative. The meeting adjourned at 9:59 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Leona H. Holley, City Clerk