



Schenectady Metroplex Development Authority Board Meeting Minutes July 14, 2021

Present: Ray Gillen, Brad Lewis, Sharon Jordan, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, Robert Dieterich, Neil Golub, Steven Rifenburg and Paul Webster

Absent: Michael Angelozzi, Nancy Casso and Todd Edwards

Others: Jayme Lahut, David Hogenkamp, Maureen Behrens and Jennifer Medler

Call to Order: Mr. Gillen called the meeting to order at 5:30 p.m.

- 1. Approval of Minutes:** Mr. Golub made the motion to approve the minutes of the June 9, 2021 meeting; seconded by Mr. Lewis and approved.
- 2. Treasurer's Report:** Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas presented the Treasurer's Report as of June 30. Sales tax income was ahead of budget and overall income exceeded the budget forecast. Operating expenses remain slightly under budget. Pre-development costs continue to be well under budget. Cash on hand totaled \$4.57 million. Mr. Lewis moved to accept the Treasurer's Report; seconded by Mr. Dieterich and approved following discussion.
- 3. Downtown Schenectady Improvement Corporation:** Resolution 1482-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan
1482-21 called for a Metroplex grant of \$120,000 to assist the DSIC with its downtown cleanup program and an additional grant of \$125,000 to replace an older truck and Bobcat. The DSIC provides litter pickup, trash removal, seasonal landscaping and snow removal. Resolution 1482-21 was moved by Ms. Jordan; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.
- 4. Columbia Altamont, LLC Project:** Resolution 1483-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan
Resolution 1483-21 authorized a partial exemption from taxes for the renovation of a vacant portion of a 9,000 square foot building at 1925 Curry Road so it can be repurposed and leased to Community Care Physicians P.C. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved Resolution 1483-21; seconded by Mr. Dieterich and approved.
- 5. 500 State Street Renovation Project:** Resolution 1484-21 — Hold a Public Hearing
Redburn Development Partners has proposed renovation of the former Bank of America building at 500 State Street. The project budget is \$12.4 million. Metroplex participation involves a partial exemption from taxes. Resolution 1484-21 authorized holding a public hearing. It was moved by Ms. Jordan; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.
- 6. 500 State Street Renovation Project:** Resolution 1485-21 — SEQRA Lead Agency
Resolution 1485-21 authorized Metroplex to seek lead agency status and complete the state-mandated environmental review of the building rehabilitation and meeting parking requirements. The building is historically significant and retains characteristics of renovations undertaken in 1952 and 1973. Redburn will be applying for the property to be

listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The project is also a DRI award recipient. The project will be classified as a Type I action thereby requiring a coordinated review among all involved agencies. Resolution 1485-21 was moved by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas; seconded by Ms. Jordan and approved.

7. Chas. G. Burch Supply Co. Façade Project: Resolution 1486-21 — SEQRA

Resolution 1486-21 characterized the project as an Unlisted Action and determined the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. The project involves construction of a 4,225 square foot addition for a kitchen and bath showroom as well as façade improvements to existing building. Resolution 1486-21 was moved by Mr. Golub; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

8. Chas. G. Burch Supply Co. Project: Resolution 1487-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

The company, a supplier of plumbing, kitchen and bathroom products in Schenectady was founded in 1890 and operates from an 11,000 square foot facility on Albany Street. The project expands its showroom and will provide better accessibility. Metroplex participation involved a \$95,000 renovation grant and an exemption from sales taxes for the project improvements. Resolution 1487-21 was moved by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas; seconded by Ms. Jordan and approved following discussion.

7. Consent Agenda: Resolutions 1488-21 through 1490-21

The consent agenda consisted of authorizing Metroplex financial assistance for three projects on Crane Street located at 727, 815 and 935, respectively. Each property owner has secured a \$50,000 grant through Better Community Neighborhoods, Inc. (BCNI) through the New York Main Street (NYMS) program. The program targeted commercial/residential improvements such as façade renovations, interior commercial and residential building upgrades, and streetscape enhancements. Metroplex participation involved matching grants of \$15,000 for 727 Crane Street, \$25,000 for 815 Crane Street and \$50,000 for 935 Crane Street. Ms. Jordan made the motion to approve the consent agenda as presented; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved unanimously.

8. Pedestrian Safety / Crosswalk Improvement Project: Resolution 1491-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

The project involved upgrading pedestrian accommodations at eight signalized intersections in downtown Schenectady in and around City Hall. NYS DOT awarded the City of Schenectady \$1.2 million for the installation of new pedestrian / crosswalk buttons, new traffic signals, paving, painting and striping, and converting Jay Street to two-way vehicular traffic from Liberty Street to Union Street (the entrance to Little Italy). The project budget is \$2,000,000 for project design, implementation and project-related expenses. Resolution 1491-21 awarded a \$300,000 grant to the City as partial matching funds. The Metroplex grant will be dedicated to traffic signalization and pedestrian upgrades. Mr. Golub moved to approve Resolution 1491-21; seconded by Ms. Jordan and approved after discussion. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas abstained.

9. 53 Freemans Bridge Road Renovation Project: Resolution 1492-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1492-21 supported the gut rehabilitation of 53 Freemans Bridge Road to attract new businesses via a \$50,000 Metroplex façade grant and partial exemption on taxes. The project fully modernizes the structure. The exterior façade will be replaced with a new siding panel system, decorative stone, new windows and awnings, and replacement of the loading dock and garage doors. There will be site improvements including repaving the parking lot and landscape treatment in front of the building. A local company, RAD Soap Co., is the first announced tenant by establishing their business headquarters and production space within the building. Mr. Dieterich moved to approve Resolution 1492-21; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved following discussion.

10. RAD Soap Co. Project: Resolution 1493-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

The RAD Soap Co. was started in 2009 manufacturing natural body care products, such as, soaps, creams, and detergents. RAD Soap Co. operates a retail store at Stuyvesant Plaza and sells to Whole Foods. Metroplex participation involves a \$95,000 grant for leasehold improvements and \$15,000 for relocation and rental assistance. Mr. Dieterich moved to approve Resolution 1493-21; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

11. Downtown Fix-up #4 Project: Resolution 1494-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1494-21 allocated \$150,000 for downtown improvements from the curb to the building in selected parts of downtown, such as, sidewalks, streetlight repairs, curb repairs, landscaping, resetting pavers, etc. Ms. Jordan moved to approve Resolution 1494-21; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

12. Schenectady Film Commission Project: Resolution 1495-21 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1495-21 authorizes a \$60,000 grant to Discover Schenectady, the County's tourism and convention bureau, to promote the County's motion picture and television production industry. The goal is to attract films, commercials and other productions that boost the local economy across several industry sectors. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to approve Resolution 1495-21; seconded by Mr. Dieterich and approved.

Public Comment: None

Board Comment: Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas commended Discover Schenectady for assisting with the last-minute relocation of USTA junior national tennis tournament from West Point to Schenectady's Central Park. They also arranged for hotel accommodations for all the players.

Adjournment: Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Golub. The meeting was adjourned at 6:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jayne Lahut
Executive Director