



**Schenectady Metroplex Development Authority
Board Meeting Minutes
August 31, 2022**

Present: Ray Gillen, Robert Dieterich, Karen Zalewski-Wildzunas, Brad Lewis, Sharon Jordan, Steven Rifenburg, Nancy Casso, Todd Edwards, and Hayward Horton

Absent: Michael Angelozzi and Neil Golub

Others: Jayme Lahut (Executive Director), Tonia Lehoisky, David Hogenkamp, Jennifer Medler and Danielle Walsh

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

1. Approval of Minutes: Ms. Jordan made the motion to approve the minutes of the June 29, 2022, meeting; seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

2. Affinity Group Relocation Project: Resolution 1569-22 — SEQRA

The Affinity Group, a North American food sales and marketing agency, plans to move its local operations to 620 Union Street, renovate the space and establish a culinary training center. Resolution 1569-22 characterized the action as an Unlisted Action and issued a negative declaration that the project would not have a significant impact on the environment. Ms. Jordan moved to approve Resolution 1569-22, seconded by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

3. Affinity Group Relocation Project: Resolution 1570-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1570-22 authorized Metroplex making a \$100,000 grant, providing an exemption on sales taxes for purchases of materials, supplies, and FF&E associated with the project and issuing a mortgage recording tax exemption. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to approve Resolution 1570-22, seconded by Ms. Jordan and approved.

4. Armory Studios NY Project: Resolution 1571-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1571-22 approved financial assistance for continued investment in Armory Studios NY including updated HVAC systems, expanded electrical system capacity, and associated repairs. The project budget was \$665,000. Metroplex's participation involves making a \$325,000 grant for the improvement project. Resolution 1571-22 was moved by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas, seconded by Mr. Dieterich, and approved following discussion.

5. Habitat for Humanity Facade Project: Resolution 1572-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

The project involved façade improvements including a large art mural on the exterior of the building at Liberty Street and Broadway. The work is estimated to cost \$60,000. Metroplex participation involved a \$30,000 matching grant. Mr. Lewis moved to approve Resolution 1572-22, seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

6. Van Vranken Demolition Project: Resolution 1573-22 — SEQRA

The project involved the acquisition and demolition/site preparation of four properties on Van Vranken Avenue. The former Cornell's and Ritz Terrace would be removed and redeveloped. Resolution 1573-22 characterized the action as an Unlisted Action and issued a negative declaration. Ms. Jordan moved Resolution 1573-22, seconded by Ms. Casso and approved.

7. Van Vranken Demolition Project: Resolution 1574-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Metroplex will provide financial assistance for demolishing the buildings, removing a leaking oil tank and grading the site. Metroplex's participation involved a conditional loan of \$200,000 that can be converted to a grant when the site gets redeveloped. The project developer, Brendan Nally, is working on development plans and project financing. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to approve Resolution 1574-22, seconded by Ms. Casso and approved following discussion.

8. 869 Crane Street Façade Project: Resolution 1575-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1575-22 awarded a \$50,000 matching grant to the owners of 869 Crane Street including new storefront windows and doors, lighting, painting and other repairs. Better Community Neighborhoods, Inc. (BCNI) is assisting commercial property owners on Crane Street to access State grant funds. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to approve Resolution 1575-22, seconded by Mr. Dieterich and approved.

9. 925 Crane Street Façade Projects: Resolution 1576-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Resolution 1576-22 authorized a \$28,000 matching grant for the property owner of 925 Crane Street for façade enhancements in conjunction with Better Community Neighborhoods, Inc. (BCNI) and the New York Main Street program. Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved Resolution 1576-22, seconded by Mr. Dieterich and approved.

10. 100-104 Jay Street Lease: Resolution 1577-22 — SEQRA

Metroplex and the City of Schenectady have agreed to a lease arrangement for the property across from City Hall. Metroplex will work with DSIC for site improvements. Resolution 1577-22 characterized the action as an Unlisted Action and issued a negative declaration. Mr. Horton moved to approve Resolution 1577-22, seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

11. 100-104 Jay Street Lease: Resolution 1578-22 — Authorization to Lease Real Property from the City of Schenectady

Resolution 1578-22 authorized entering into a 5-year lease with the City of Schenectady for the 8,000 square foot vacant parcel opposite City Hall. DSIC plans on using the site as an urban placemaking and public art project. DSIC was recently awarded a \$20,000 grant from AARP to create an inclusive green space with ADA-compliant benches, flower beds, lighting, and public art. The City Council has already consented to leasing the land to Metroplex. Mr. Horton moved to approve Resolution 1578-22, seconded by Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

12. Building 605 / Glenville Business & Technology Park: Resolution 1579-22 — Hold a Public Hearing

This project involved the construction of an 85,000 square foot building by the Galesi Group on a 4.5-acre vacant parcel within the Glenville Business and Technology Park. Metroplex's participation would involve exemptions from sales tax, mortgage recording tax and real property tax. Resolution 1579-22 authorized holding a public hearing. Mr. Dieterich moved Resolution 1579-22, seconded by Ms. Casso and approved.

13. Environment One Corporation Expansion: Resolution 1580-22 — Hold a Public Hearing

Environment One plans to invest \$8,200,000 to build a 35,000 square foot addition to expand manufacturing, assembly and distribution of its products. The project would create 30 additional jobs. Resolution 1580-22 authorized holding a public hearing to consider financial assistance in the form of exemptions from sales tax, mortgage recording tax and real property tax. Mr. Horton moved Resolution 1580-22, seconded by Ms. Zalewski-Wildzunas and approved.

14. Niskayuna Plaza Project: Resolution 1581-22 — Adopt the General Project Plan

Schenectady County recently invested \$1.8 million for traffic safety improvements on the 2200-block of Nott Street. Metroplex seeks to make additional improvements in support of the businesses by paving parking areas and the delivery alley behind the buildings, which is in complete disrepair. Resolution 1581-22 allocated \$200,000 for the project. Mr. Horton moved Resolution 1581-22, seconded by Ms. Casso and approved.

Public Comment: None

Board Comments: Mr. Gillen welcomed new board member, Hayward Horton, representing the Town of Niskayuna, and new staff member, Danielle Walsh.

Adjournment: Mrs. Zalewski-Wildzunas moved to adjourn; seconded by Ms. Jordan. The meeting was adjourned at 6:20 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jayne B. Lahut
Executive Director