



SOMERVILLE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Location: Virtual meeting via GoToWebinar

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/rt/3796719632098260057>

Date: March 15th, 2023.

Time: The Chair convened the meeting at 5:31pm.

ATTENDANCE:

SRA Members Present: Iwona Bonney (Secretary), Phillip Ercolini (Chair), Ben Ewen-Campen (Councilor), William Gage.

SRA Members Absent: Christine Stone, Patrick McCormick.

Staff Present: Ted Fields (Senior Planner), Ben Demers (Planner).

AGENDA ITEMS:

Staff presented virtual meeting house rules to the Board.

1: Approval of minutes for the February 15, 2023 meeting:

No changes were recommended.

Iwona Bonney moved approval, as amended. Seconded by William Gage. Approved 4-0-0 (Yes-No-Abstain) by roll call vote.

2: Public Comment:

No public comments were made.

3. 90 Washington Street – Request for Qualifications (RFQ) and Civic Advisory Committee (CAC) update

Mr Fields provided an update to the SRA board on the 90 Washington Street RFQ and CAC. He explained that the City hosted a Q&A session for the RFQ, which was attended by 24 people from a variety of organizations. Mr. Fields showed a virtual tour of the site taken through drone footage that was used at the Q&A session to give attendees an idea of what the neighborhood is like, and described what was shown. This allowed developers to better see the site since the day of the actual tour had been a blizzard. Mr. Fields also explained that the City had received a number of great questions at the Q&A session, which the City has answered with their planning team and consultants and will be summarized in a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) narrative and addendum to the instrument being released later this week. The City will then be receiving submittals to the RFQ until early April, which they will then analyze and develop into a Request for Proposals (RFP) to be sent out in May or June.



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Mr. Fields then updated the SRA that the City hosted the first meeting of the 90 Washington Street Civic Advisory Committee on March 8th. The meeting was an organizational meeting. They reviewed the charter that governs the operations and protocols for the committee. The City also introduced staff contacts and committee members to each other, gave a brief description about the background of the project, and set future meeting dates for the rest of the year. The next meeting will be held on April 12th, 2023, five days after the City closes the submittal process for the RFQ. The Committee will help the City review submittals. All of this information has been posted on the SomerVoice site for the project, along with the full ten minute drone tour.

Mr. Gage asked if SRA members can receive a list of questions that were raised, and a list of who attended / the firms they represent. Mr. Fields will share this information with all members..

Mr. Ewen-Campen asked when the RFQ closes. Mr. Fields answered that it closes April 7th. Mr. Ercolini asked if this is a firm deadline. Mr. Fields responded that it is a firm deadline, yes. This is at the advice of the City's Procurement Department.

4. Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan area (299 Broadway) update.

Mr. Demers gave an update that the Urban Center Housing Tax Increment Financing (UCH-TIF) plan for 299 Broadway had passed the City Council on February 23rd, 2023. The UCH-TIF Zone, Plan, and Agreement include a 100% tax exemption on the increment over 20 years. After all signatures from the Mayor have been obtained on the Zone, Plan, and Agreement, the City will need to submit them to DHCD for approval. This approval should help the developers of 299 Broadway to close a substantial financing gap for the project which will help the City meet the goals of the Winter Hill Urban Renewal Plan and result in 288 units of housing, 132 of which will be affordable.

Mr. Demers then informed the SRA that the next step will be for the City to prepare a Land Development Agreement with Mark Development to cover this project. They will plan to bring this back to the SRA in the next couple months.

Mr. Gage asked if the SRA will need to approve this. Mr. Demers answered that this is his understanding, yes, but that Catherine Lester Salchert, the Acting Special Counsel to the SRA who was unable to attend this meeting, will be able to better answer this in April.

Mr. Ewen-Campen asked if the fallout from the Silicon Valley Bank crisis had impacted this project. Mr. Demers answered that he did not know, but would aim to get an answer for the next meeting.

Mr. Ercolini asked if these credits were federal- or state-level. Mr. Demers answered that he could not answer this adequately, but will get an answer for the next meeting.

5. Items not reasonably anticipated by the Chair

Mr. Ercolini asked that Ms. Lester Salchert gives an update at the next meeting about whether the SRA would be able to continue meeting virtually, given the end of the state of emergency in Massachusetts.



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6. Next Meeting: Wednesday, April 19th, from 5:30-7pm

The Chair confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 19th, from 5:30-7pm.

Adjournment:

The Chair requested a motion to adjourn. Iwona Bonney moved to adjourn. William Gage seconded. The motion was unanimously approved 4-0-0. by roll call vote at 5:52pm and the meeting ended.