

**DETROIT LAND BANK AUTHORITY**

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**BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING  
REMOTE MEETING VIA ZOOM**

**Tuesday, April 20, 2021**

**11:00 AM**

**MINUTES**

**VIA ZOOM:** Erica Ward Gerson  
Miranda Morrow-Bartell  
Richard Hosey  
Patricia Pernell-Shelton  
Carol Walters

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Members of the Public, Members of DLBA Staff

**CALL TO ORDER**

Board Chair Ward Gerson called the **April 20, 2021** meeting to order at **11:02 a.m.** and reviewed the process and logistics for a Zoom meeting.

**ROLL CALL**

Board Chair Ward Gerson asked Ms. Adela Bejo, Administrative Assistant, to call the roll. Ms. Bejo called roll. Four of five members were in attendance, and a quorum was met. Board Chair Ward Gerson announced that Member Morrow-Bartell would join the meeting soon, which she did

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Board Chair Ward Gerson called for a motion to approve the **March 16, 2021** Board of Directors meeting minutes. **Motion by Member Hosey** for approval of minutes. **Supported by Member Walters. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

Board Chair Ward Gerson opened the floor to public comment.

- **Joanne Warwick** – Ms. Warwick lives near the site of the North End Landings Project proposed by Avanath Development, LLC. She objects to the Project and asked that the Board postpone the vote on the Project until members of the North End neighborhood can meet with Mayor Duggan. Ms. Warwick played a brief excerpt of an audio recording of the Mayor discussing development in neighborhoods.
- **Stephanie Miller** – Ms. Miller is a North End resident who is opposed to the North End Landings Project. She asked that the Board delay the vote on the Project until the developer conducts additional community engagement.

- **Louis Gelinas.** – Mr. Gelinas lives near the corner of Bethune and Oakland streets and is opposed to the North End Landings Project. He would like greenspace in the neighborhood and objects to the density the Project would create as he would like the density in the neighborhood to be at its historical levels.
- **Joyce Moore** – Ms. Moore asked that the Board Members vote no on the North End Landings Project and asked where she should send a letter about removing the Tax Increment Financing in Virginia Park.
- **Susan** – Susan is a North End resident of over 40 years who lives near the site of the North End Landings Project. She objects to the Project preferring greenspace to density. She believes that the developer's recent modifications to the Project are inadequate.
- **Quincy Jones** – Mr. Jones is in favor of the North End Landings Project and said that it has been discussed since 2016. He believes that density is the result of essential growth in a neighborhood.
- **Tyson Gersh** – Mr. Gersh said that he and an overwhelming number of people in the North End are opposed to the North End Landings Project. He said that silencing the community is disrespectful and that the Board should vote no on the Project and consider alternative development plans.
- **Linda Boyd** – Ms. Boyd is a new resident on Smith Street near the site of the proposed North End Landings Project and is opposed to the Project as it will likely increase crowds at the nearby park. She also believes that there will be insufficient parking for the new residents living at the Project.
- **Abass El-Hage** – Mr. El-Hage is a North End resident and owns other property in the neighborhood. He is opposed to the North End Landings Project as he would like more ownership opportunities in the Project.
- **David Thomas** – Mr. Thomas owns a local home improvement company and asked how he can get more information regarding how to purchase property from the Land Bank. Board Chair Ward Gerson directed him to the Land Bank website and suggested that he ask any questions by emailing the Land Bank at [inquire@detroitlandbank.org](mailto:inquire@detroitlandbank.org).
- **Andrew Arends** – Mr. Arends lives near the site of the North End Landings Project and is opposed to it because of the lack of home ownership opportunities and the developer is an out-of-state organization.
- **Helema Gasel** – Ms. Gasel urged the Board to vote no on the North End Landings Project resolution because he is concerned about overcrowding at the nearby park and what he sees as a lack of community engagement on the part of the developer.
- **Cornelius Harris** – Mr. Harris owns a business in the North End and asked that the Board vote no on the North End Landings Project resolution. He believes the Project will be destabilizing to the neighborhood and could create tensions.
- **Lynette Roberson** – Ms. Roberson is President of the Lower North End Block Club and is opposed to the North End Landings Project. She noted that all of the developer's corporate jobs

are out of state and the Project will limit home or land ownership opportunities. She said she has a petition with over 500 signatures in opposition to the Project.

- **Samantha Meyer** – Ms. Meyer lives near the site of the North End Landings Project and is opposed to it because it would double density in the neighborhood and result in overcrowding at the local park.
- **Joshua Kovarik** – Mr. Kovarik lives near the site of the North End Landings Project and is opposed to it. He believes that the land has not been made available to other developers and that the rents proposed by the developer would support home ownership instead.
- **Mike Hammond** – Mr. Hammond is a developer who has built thousands of apartments and chairs a non-profit CDC. He is opposed to the North End Landings Project because it does not fit within a neighborhood of single-family homes.
- **Joeleo Smith** – Mr. Smith is a developer in the North End and is disappointed to hear all the opposition to the North End Landings Project. He is in favor of the Project and believes that the proposed density fits within the City's master plan for the neighborhood.
- **Lesley Piazza** - Ms. Piazza is opposed to the North End Landings Project as she would like to see more jobs and profits stay in Detroit.
- **Michael Martin** – Mr. Martin has worked on properties in the North End for four years and believes that the Lower North End Block Club is in favor of development in general and dialogue with developers.
- **Electra Fulbright** – Ms. Fulbright is a cofacilitator of the North End Alliance and is opposed to the North End Landings Project.

#### **DISCUSSION REGARDING THE PROPOSED NORTH END LANDINGS PROJECT**

Board Chair Ward Gerson requested a brief interruption of public comment in order to give Donald Rencher, Director of City of Detroit Housing and Revitalization Department, an opportunity to speak about the North End Landings Project as he had limited time before he had to leave the meeting. Mr. Rencher noted that the Project is compatible with the zoning of the proposed site and he shared historical arial photographs of the site with housing consistent with the Project. He also described changes the developer has made to the Project in response to community concerns including making funds available to nearby residents for exterior repairs, setting aside a portion of the Project for ownership as opposed to rental, and including affordable housing units in the Project.

Extensive discussion ensued among the Board Members who also asked questions of two representatives of the developer who were in attendance, Daryl Carter and Ronald McDonald. Messrs. Carter and McDonald responded to the questions as did Mr. Rencher.

At the conclusion of the discussion, Board Chair Ward Gerson asked that the agenda be modified to move the resolution regarding the North End Landings Project which was resolution number 8 to the top of that part of the agenda. Board Chair Ward Gerson then reopened the floor to public comment.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT (RESUMED)**

- **Kimberly Jalloh** – Ms. Jalloh has lived in the North End for over 50 years and lives near the site of the North End Landings Project. She is in favor of the Project and hopes that it will help restore the community.
- **Phillis Judkins** – Ms. Judkins has been a resident of the North End since 1972 and supports the North End Landings Project. She believes that adding renters to the neighborhood will not be a problem.
- **Freda Perry** – Ms. Perry has lived in the North End for quite a long time and believes that the community engagement regarding the North End Landings Project has been insufficient and she is opposed to the rental units that the Project would add to the neighborhood.
- **Victoria Bulkakova** – Ms. Bulkakova owns a business in the North End and is opposed to the North End Landings Project. She cited a petition in opposition to the Project that has 538 signatures.
- **Jason Jones** – Mr. Jones is a local developer and while he does not live in the North End he is concerned with the precedent that would be set by rejecting the North End Landings Project. He noted that the Land Bank should clarify its process for working with developers.
- **Ette Garth** – Ms. Garth lives near the site of the North End Landings Project and is in favor of it. She said that it would replicate what the neighborhood looked like years ago.
- **Reshounn Foster** – Ms. Foster thanked Member Pernel-Shelton for the comments she made earlier in the meeting regarding the North End Landings Project. He said that more time is needed to find solutions to the Project.
- **Lynn Wiggins** – Ms. Wiggins noted that she is unaware of any rental properties that convert to owned homes.
- **LaWanna Smith** – Ms. Smith owns property in the Lower North End and is opposed to the North End Landings Project as proposed. She suggested that the developer work on land already under their control before purchasing property from the Land Bank.
- **Dawn** – Dawn lives in the North End near the site of the North End Landings Project and is opposed to the Project due to lack of transparency.
- **Pamela Ruffins** – Ms. Ruffins spoke in opposition to the North End Landings Project.
- **Julia Galinas** – Ms. Galinas would prefer that the North End Landings Project be spread out or that alternative developments be considered.

## **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE**

Saskia Thompson, Executive Director, referred Board Members to the department reports included in the Board package and reported that the DLBA closed on 454 structure sales during the month of March 2021.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **a. Resolutions**

**4-08-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO OPTION TO PURCHASE & DEVELOP AND AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN PROPERTY WITH AVANATH DEVELOPMENT, LLC. Motion by Member Hosey to approve resolution. Supported by Member Morrow-Bartell. MOTION APPROVED FOUR TO ONE ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-01-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO PURCHASE & DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH NATASHA BARANIK. Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Walters to approve resolution. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-02-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH CALYXEUM CATALYST. Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Hosey to approve resolution. Supported by Member Walters. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-04-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO OPTION TO PURCHASE & DEVELOP AND AGREEMENT TO MAINTAIN PROPERTY WITH HOSMER HOLDINGS, LLC. Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Walters to approve resolution. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-05-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO PURCHASE & DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH MARJORIE STREET GARDEN. Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Hosey to approve resolution. Supported by Member Morrow-Bartell. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-03-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO PURCHASE & DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT WITH HENRY FORD HEALTH SYSTEM. Jano Hanna, Director Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Hosey to approve resolution. Supported by Member Walters. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-06-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AGREEMENTS WITH THE MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION. Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. Motion by Member Hosey to approve resolution. Supported by Member Walters. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-07-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING SALE OF VACANT LOTS TO WEBSTER STEVERSON.** Karla Marshall Manager, Projects & Community Partnership, Disposition, provided background on the resolution. **Motion by Member Morrow-Bartell to approve resolution. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

**4-09-2021 RESOLUTION APPROVING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO CONVEY PROPERTY TO THE CITY OF DETROIT FOR A REMOTE CONTROL CAR RACETRACK.** Rob Linn, Director, Inventory, provided background on the resolution. **Motion by Member Walters to approve resolution. Supported by Member Hosey. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.**

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#### **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, Board Chair Ward Gerson called for a **Motion to adjourn. Motion by Member Hosey to adjourn the meeting. Supported by Member Walters. MOTION UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED ON A ROLL CALL VOTE.** The meeting was adjourned at **2:01 p.m.**