

**CITY OF BUFFALO URBAN RENEWAL AGENCY
BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

REMOTE MEETING VIA WEBEX CONFERENCE CALL

MEETING DATE: November 19, 2020

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mayor Byron Brown, BURA Chairman
Council President Darius Pridgen
Brendan R. Mehaffy, BURA Vice Chairman
Commissioner Donna Estrich
Timothy Ball, Corporation Counsel
Council Member Joseph Golombek
Council Member Christopher Scanlon

SECRETARY: Scott C. Billman

OTHERS PRESENT: Yvonne McCray, BURA Director of Housing, Jenna Bichler, BURA Director of Operations, Nadine Marrero, Tracy Cooley BURA Deputy Director of FCA, Jessica Brown Director of Administration & Finance, Harold Cardwell, Maria Melchiorre, Tony Chestnut, Leslie Vishwanath, Pam Walker-Jarmon, Evelyn Rodriguez

1. Mr. Mehaffy called the meeting to order at 9:45 am.
2. Mr. Ball made the motion to waive the reading of the minutes of the October 29, 2020 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Estrich and carried unanimously.

3. **HOME**

- 3a. **SCHOOL 75 REDEVELOPMENT 57 HOWARD STREET AND OTHERS WNY VETERANS HOUSING COALITION, INC. APPLICANT, NORSTAR DEVELOPMENT USA, L.P. DEVELOPER**
- Agency Members approved a request for the City of Buffalo Urban Renewal Agency allocate \$850,000 in HOME funds allocated to the developer or an entity formed by the developer for the specific purpose of the completion of the School 75 Redevelopment project at 57 Howard Street, 38 Howard, 86 Howard, 70 Adams and 71 Adams. School 75 Redevelopment is a \$29.1 million-dollar sixty-five (65) unit affordable housing project that is comprised of five (5) sites that include a total of twenty-six (26) parcels. The project will involve the historic adaptive reuse of School 75 into a mix of 47 studio, 1 and 2-bedroom apartments, residential common space, and commercial space that will be occupied by the WYVHC as its new corporate offices. The 47 residential apartments will include four (4) studio units, forty-one (41) 1-bedroom units and two (2) 2-bedroom units. Of the total 47 units, 33 will be for permanent supportive housing units for Veterans who are Homeless with incomes at or below 30% of median income. The remaining units will be for households at or below 50% of median income. Six (6) units will be HOME assisted. The residential common area spaces will include a community room, interior courtyard, laundry room and property management space. WNYVHC will occupy the remaining 2,600 square feet of commercial space as their new corporate offices. The project's twelve (12) new construction homes will contain eighteen (18) rental units, including seven (7) 2-bedroom apartments for households with incomes at or below 50% AMI and eleven (11) 2-bedroom apartments for households with incomes at or below 60% AMI. Western New York Veteran's Housing Coalition, Inc. provides housing for homeless Veterans and Veterans with special needs.
- Motion made by Council President Pridgen to approve Item 3a, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously.**

3b. NEGATIVE DECLARATION OF LA PLAZA DE VIRGINIA 253 - 269 VIRGINIA HISPANOS UNIDOS DE BUFFALO (HUB) -DEVELOPER AND APPROVAL OF HOME LOAN

Agency Members approved a request to allocate \$950,000 in HOME funds for the Virginia Hispanos Unidos de Buffalo (HUB) project. The funds will be allocated to the developer or an entity formed by the developer for the specific purpose of the completion of the project at 253, 257, 263 and 269 Virginia Street. La Plaza de Virginia is a \$16.9 million dollar forty-six (46) unit affordable housing project that is comprised of four (4) parcels encompassing most of the block on the southeasterly side of Virginia Street between West Avenue and 10th Street. All parcels are currently vacant lots except for 269 Virginia Street, which has a dilapidated mixed-use structure that will be demolished in favor of new construction.

The proposed supportive housing project will consist of the demolition of a structure and new construction of a 3-story mixed-use building. The building will contain forty-six (46) 1-bedroom rental units for very low and low income senior citizens ages 55 and older. It will also include a restaurant/café, laundry room, community room, space for HUB's Senior Recreational Program, Social Day Care and other senior service programs, as well as office space for other not for profits. Fourteen (14) of the units will be for homeless frail elderly/seniors; these individuals will be provided with comprehensive support services. Eight (8) of the units will be HOME assisted.

Motion made by Commissioner Estrich to approve Item 3b, seconded by Mr. Ball and carried unanimously.

4. CDBG

4a. Contract Extension and Modification for Consultant Agreement with Asakura Robinson

Agency Members approved a request to extend and modify the consultant contract with Asakura Robinson to develop policies and procedures to support neighborhood planning across the City. Asakura Robinson will assist BURA to build the capacity of planning staff to kick start a new era of neighborhood planning in the City of Buffalo through the development of policies and procedures to be crafted into a user friendly manual with accompanying templates and through direct staff training in real world planning situations. Funding will be from CDBG – Planning and Administration in the amount of \$77,492.00. The work builds off other work of Asakura Robinson including the BURA reorganization.

Motion made by Mr. Ball to approve Item 4a seconded by Councilmember Scanlon and carried unanimously.

5. OTHER

5a. INTER MUNICIPAL AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES WITH BUFFALO MUNICIPAL HOUSING AUTHORITY (“BMHA”)

Agency Members approved a request to enter into an Inter Municipal Agreement for Services with Buffalo Municipal Housing Authority (“BMHA”). BURA will provide services to BMHA in an amount not to exceed \$250,000 for the following: Project Development and Management Services; GIS Services; Planning Services and Grant writing technical assistance. The Authority shall pay an Administrative Fee to BURA for overhead and other services not listed above in the amount of 2%. Prior to specific work performed by BURA, the Director of Operations and the Executive Director of BMHA will confirm in writing details of the work, including but not limited to staffing commitments and timeframes for completion.

Motion made by Council President Pridgen to approve Item 5a, seconded by Commissioner Estrich and carried unanimously.

6. INFORMATIONAL ITEMS

6a. HOUSING PROGRAM POLICIES AND PROCEDURES GUIDEBOOK UPDATE

Ms. Vishwanath, Director of Program Management provided an update to the Board on the Housing Program Policies and Procedures Guidebook Update, that was recommended to Governance Committee by the Policy Review Committee.

6b. EXPEDITED VENDOR PAYMENT POLICY

Ms. Cooley, Deputy Director of FCA provided the Board with an overview of the Expedited Vendor Payment Policy.

6c. FINANCIAL CONTROL OF AGENCIES FISCAL UPDATE

Ms. Cooley, Deputy Director of FCA provided a fiscal update to the Board.

7. There being no further business to discuss, Mr. Ball made the motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Commissioner Estrich and carried unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 10:25 am.

Scott C. Billman, BURA Secretary

Reported By: Risë Geller