

Tompkins County Industrial Development Agency
Board of Directors Meeting Final Minutes
November 9, 2022 – 2:30 – 4:00 PM
TC Legislative Chambers
121 E. Court Street
Ithaca NY 14850

Present: Rich John, Faith Vavra, Jeff Gorsky, Shawna Black, Mike Sigler, John Guttridge, Todd Bruer

Guests: Frost Travis (GPA Management, LLC), Lincoln Morse, Mike Panko (Cliff Street Retreat)

Staff: Heather McDaniel, Ina Arthur (IAED), Kyle Gooch-remotely, Russ Gaenzle-remotely (Harris Beach), Rick Snyder (TC Finance)

CALL TO ORDER

Rich John called meeting to order at 3:05 pm.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR

Theresa Alt - 206 Eddy Street

I have spoken about both Cliff Street Retreat and the Lofts at their public hearings – neither one is about what the City of Ithaca and Tompkins County really need. What is needed is housing that is affordable to the workforce. These projects are market rate. I don't think it is constructive for the IDA to be subsidizing these projects across the board. So, I urge you to make it your policy to support affordable housing and yes it takes some figuring to find where the real need is. We know that retail and hotel workers and teachers and nurses cannot find housing anywhere in the city within walking distance of their jobs or on usable bus routes.

Zachary Rosenbaum

Over the summer, I spent my time working at Paddle Ithaca where we provide paddleboard, Kayak, Canoe and duffy rentals on the inlet. One of my best friends was a manager there and would always rave about her job and try to get me to work there. Over the summer, we had a lot of fun. I loved the hospitality element of it all. From playing cornhole with guests to recounting their adventures out on the water. We'd have regulars who'd always hang around and chat post paddle. My bosses always shared this interest, they made sure we offered water, drybags, lockers, dog bowls and would regularly check in to see if there was anything else we could offer to provide better service to our community. We strived to tailor our space and services to best serve our inlet community. One day a coworker and I had an idea to host a race around the inlet down at the shop. We planned out how it would be best facilitated and put together a pitch to show Linc and Brian. The loved the idea and offered assistance in getting permits from the city. Sadly, it was too late to get permission for this year, but next year we are glad to be hosting the first official Race Around the Inlet. I first learned about the Cliff Street project from Brian. He described it as a mixed-use community centered development. I had no idea what that meant but he sure seemed excited. He talked about how the commercial unites will be an opportunity for small upcoming local businesses to thrive in an environment of growth and community. The community gathering space which hopes to vitalize and bring a sense of neighborhood to the west end. With Linc and Brian at the helm of this operation I can only see them steering in the direction of community. I believe they'll bring the same vigorous attitude towards hospitality and community development I've seen at Paddle Ithaca to the Cliff Street project.

Lincoln George Morse - Cliff Street Retreat

I am the construction manager representing the Cliff Street project. My resume has been presented. I am qualified to do this build. There was some question if this will be a publicly bid project. To guarantee the best product we will ask all qualified to bid this project. I will go to the trade unions and ask for local workers. The cliff street retreat is putting together a maker's market in December. This will be a big event with over 40 vendors. This will be a foreshadowing of what the cliff street retreat is all about. Tax incentives allow companies to start up a business. Tax incentives are a pass through to the tenants and are not handouts to rich developers. These incentives are there to help businesses to grow. It works but it takes time.

Brian Poulson – Cliff Street Retreat

We are always coming up with ideas to engage with the community. We are also thinking of doing a paddle market in the future. We are going to bring together a number of the paddle players in the community – it's about building relationships.

The following comments were read into the record

Michael Masters – Accufab, 232 Cherry Street

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. adding a development that brings approximately 190 new residents and thousands of square feet of retail space. The City of Ithaca needs middle income housing downtown and this underutilized area could continue to be built into a thriving neighborhood with integrated small business. The project's proximity to local business is a plus for prospective tenants. The mixed-use model has been started on Cherry St., it makes sense to continue.

Darrin Gardner – Performance – RX, 241 Cherry Street

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. Adding a development that brings almost 200 new and diverse residents will make a huge impact on the viability of the neighborhood. Our business would benefit from having additional people living and working so close by. The future success of the area depends on transformative projects like 132 Cherry St.

Rick Manzardo – Vecino Group

I am writing in support of a CIITAP 10-year tax abatement for The Hive, a proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry Street. As the developer of Ithaca Arthaus at 130 Cherry Street, we would welcome additional housing and retail added to the area. The Hive will help transform the neighborhood in a positive way by bringing more residents and commercial options, as well as a new vibrancy to the area. We see this development as a vital part in the future growth of the neighborhood.

Frank Lomax – Managing Partner, Headwaters Solutions LLC

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. As a long-term area resident and business owner as well as someone who is looking to possibly invest into the neighborhood and create up to 100 additional high-quality engineering and manufacturing jobs, I would be ecstatic to see quality housing and retail added to the area. 132 Cherry will help transform the neighborhood in a positive way. The project will bring a new vibrancy with all the people living and working within it. We see this building as one of hopefully many more to come.

John Mitchell – Austins Helping Hands, 226 Cecil Malone Drive

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. Adding a development that brings approximately 200 new residents and retail space. This will help transform the neighborhood in a big way. The City of Ithaca needs desperately housing downtown and this is underutilized area that could eventually become a thriving neighborhood. The project is located in an area that is ideal for housing. There would be a huge impact on our business and the and surrounding community as a whole.

Tim Paulson – Pallas Fitness, 241 Cherry St.

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. Adding a development that brings almost 200 new and diverse residents will make a huge impact on the viability of the neighborhood. Our business would benefit from having additional people living and working so close by. The future success of the area depends on transformative projects like 132 Cherry St.

Francis Paolangeli – Alie Attic Storage, 233 Cecil Malone Drive

I am writing in support of the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. The neighborhood has been plagued with crime over the last few years and has deteriorated tremendously in terms of safety. Adding a development that. Brings almost 200 new and diverse residents will have a huge impact on transforming the neighborhood into what it could and should become. I hope you will see the value in adding this building, which would anchor the neighborhood.

Jerry Dietz – CSP Management

I am writing in support of a tax abatement for the proposed mixed-use development at 132 Cherry St. Adding a development that brings approximately 190 new residents will help transform the neighborhood in a positive way. The City of Ithaca needs housing downtown to help with the housing crises. This is underutilized area that I believe could eventually become a diverse and thriving neighborhood. The project is located in an area that is ideal for walkability, is several blocks from Wegmans and is on a direct route for TCAT. This project is an important anchor to revitalizing this part of our city. I am fully aware that the tax abatement the project is seeking is significant to its financial viability and believe it worthy of this assistance.

ADDITIONS TO THE AGENDA – None

BUSINESS

TCIDA Public Meeting Videoconference Policy – Approval

John Guttridge made a motion to approve the TCIDA Public Meeting Videoconferencing Policy with an amendment to section 4b to include communicable illnesses. Jeff Gorsky seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

Cliff Street Retreat – Final Approval

Jeff Gorsky recused himself due to a conflict of interest with this project.

Mike Sigler made a motion to approve the authorizing resolution for the SERED407, LLC (Cliff Street Retreat) project. Faith Vavra seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4 – 1 – 2 (John, Guttridge, Varva, Siger - Yes, Gorsky - Abstain, Bruer, Black - No)

Gateway Lofts (GPA Management, LLC @ 401 E. State St). – Final Approval

Jeff Gorsky recused himself due to a conflict of interest with this project.

Mike Sigler made a motion to approve the authorizing resolution for the GPA Management, LLC (Lofts @ 401 E State Street) project. Faith Vavra seconded the motion. The motion was approved 4 – 1 – 2 (John, Guttridge, Varva, Siger - Yes, Gorsky - Abstain, Bruer, Black - No)

NSF Enfield Solar 1, 2, 3 – STE and PILOT Extension Request

The three solar projects have not yet begun construction and are requesting an extension to the sales tax exemption and PILOT start date for all three projects.

Robert Lynch of the Town of Enfield spoke regarding the towns dismay of the project developer cutting down the trees on the project parcels.

Jeff Gorsky made a motion to approve all three authorizing resolutions for NYS Enfield Solar 1, 2, and 3 to extend the sales tax exemption and PILOT start dates for all three projects. John Guttridge seconded the motion. The motion was approved 5 – 2 (Sigler and Bruer – No).

132 Cherry Clinton, LLC (The Hive) – Application

Heather McDaniel introduced the project.

The project is located on the Cayuga Inlet within walking and biking distance to downtown and all of Ithaca’s beloved amenities, 132 Cherry is primed to be transformed into the Hive, a new community landmark in Ithaca. The existing building on the site was demolished to construct a primarily residential mixed-use development. The Hive will have two five-story buildings with a combined total gross floor area of 174,528 square feet. The buildings will contain 143 residential units on four floors, three commercial spaces totaling approximately 4,350 square feet, 43 parking spaces on the ground floor, and indoor and outdoor amenities. The Hive will be located immediately adjacent to a new footbridge crossing the Cayuga Inlet, creating an immediate walking/biking connection to the Cayuga Waterfront Trail and the broader regional trail network.

The applicant is requesting consideration for the CIITAP, 10-year financial need along with the enhanced energy incentive. The project is located just outside the CIITAP boundary. When the City of Ithaca rezoned the Waterfront, West End, and Cherry Street/Inlet areas to support multi-story, mixed use development, staff at the IDA and the City worked together to recommend expanding the CIITAP boundary to include those areas. This was during the time the applicant was considering a purchase and redevelopment of the property. However, the City of Ithaca declined to include the Cherry Street portion that had been rezoned for residential development in the expanded boundary. The incentives requested deviate from the TCIDA’s UTEP because it is outside the boundary.

John Guttridge confirmed that the project will make the payment to the County Housing Development Fund at closing.

Mike Sigler asked for the reason that no affordable housing will be part of this project. Todd Fox stated that he has another development project across the street that will have 200 units of affordable housing.

John Guttridge asked if a letter of support from the City of Ithaca is required. It was confirmed that a letter is not requested. The IDA has authority to deliver incentives.

John Guttridge requested a letter of support from the City of Ithaca since it is outside the CIITAP boundary.

John Guttridge made a motion to move the 132 Cherry Clinton, LLC project to a public hearing. Jeff Gorsky seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

CHAIRS REPORT – None

STAFF REPORT

Heather McDaniel reported that the BVSHF III project has gone back to the City of Ithaca for a variance to increase units. The City Harbor project will be closing in the first quarter of 2023.

Discussions with the developers of Southworks (formerly Chainworks) on a PILOT agreement have begun.

Yellow Barn Solar is a 160MW industrial scale solar project – discussions regarding this large project have begun though it is still going through the State approval process.

Heather McDaniel and Megan McDonald from the Tompkins County Department of Planning met with the Town of Ithaca to discuss the current housing policy and opportunities to expand the area to include portions of the urbanized area in the Town that could support mixed use and multi-family housing at a scale that could be incentivized by the IDA. This was a recommendation from the IDA's housing committee discussion last year. The Town identified some areas that might be good candidates and is interested in further discussion.

MINUTES

Mike Sigler made a motion to approve the TCIDA Board meeting minutes from October 12, 2022. Jeff Gorsky seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

Jeff Gorsky made a motion to take the meeting into executive session to discuss pending litigation. John Guttridge seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

Jeff Gorsky made a motion to bring the meeting out of executive session. John Guttridge seconded the motion. The motion was approved 7-0.

The meeting adjourned at 4:20 pm.

Minutes were approved at the December 14, 2022 meeting.