



Westfield Redevelopment Authority Meeting

February 4, 2020

ANNUAL MEETING AGENDA

Municipal Building, 59 Court Street, Westfield, MA, Room 315
8:00 AM.

MEMBERS PRESENT

STAFF

MEMBERS ABSENT

Kathy Witalisz, Chair

Peter J. Miller, Acting Executive Director

William Parks, Vice-Chair

Christine Fedora, Office Manager

Mark Morin

:

Ali Salehi

Tom Woodson

1.) The above members were in attendance.

Also in attendance:

Cal Annino, Counsel for the W.R.A.

Peter Currier, Westfield News

Ann Lentini, Domus, Inc.

Mr. Miller stated Attorney Annino and himself have been reviewing the W.R.A. By-Laws, there are a few items that need action. Those being:

- a. Summary of activities.
- b. Financial Report (Requirement of DHCD)
- c. Election of Officers (Chairperson, Vice-Chair, Secretary)



a. Chair Witalisz noted the focal point of the W.R.A. during the past year for the Summary of Activities was the Elm Street Renewal Project.

- The past year the WRA has started obtaining properties.
- Utile report was received in April.
- R.F.I. was advertised, 2 proposals were received, and the hope is to build on them in 2020.

b. Financial report

Mr. Miller stated the end of the year balance is \$31,651.52, there was not a lot of money expended last year. Expenditures paid out were advertisements, appraisal work. Mr. Miller noted there will be additional money after the Council's next meeting.

c. Election of Officers

Currently the officers are:	Chair	Kathy Witalisz
	Vice-Chair	Bill Parks
	Secretary	Previous Executive Director (Joe Mitchell)

Chair: Member Woodson Motioned, seconded by Member Morin to nominate Kathy Witalisz as Chair. All in favor. Motion passes four (4) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carries.

Vice Chair: Member Morin Motioned, seconded by Member Woodson to nominate Member Parks as Vice Chair. All in favor. Motion passes four (4) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carries.

Secretary: Member Woodson Motioned, seconded by Member Morin to nominate Peter Miller. All in favor. Motion passes four (4) in favor, zero (0) opposed. Motion carries.

Attorney Annino suggested the acting executive director be moved to executive director. Mr. Miller suggested waiting for the mayor's direction.

Mr. Parks stated he is still waiting to hear from the governor's office regarding his position.

Mr. Miller informed the Authority Mr. Salehi would prefer not to be on the Board. Mr. Miller to speak with the Mayor to see if he has anyone in mind for the position. The rest of the members are current for another year.

Mr. Miller further noted Attorney Annino has been retained as legal counsel for major projects effective as of last month, the city's law department will be available for internal questions.



Member Woodson MOTIONED, seconded by Member Parks to adjourn the annual meeting agenda at 8:10.



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2.) Approve January 7, 2020 meeting minutes.

Mr. Miller stated the approval of the January 7, 2020 minutes will be postponed until the next meeting.
Mr. Woodson MOTIONED, seconded by Member Parks to defer to the next meeting. All in favor.

3.) Reports of Committees

a. WRA FY 2020 Financial Summary



Mr. Miller informed the Board there is currently \$31,651.52 in the account, an additional \$15,000 is forthcoming from the Council. It is on the Council's next agenda.

Chair Witalisz noted there was a reduction in the pricing of the advertising, the amount allocated was \$6,000.00 of that \$4,300.00 was spent.

Chair Witalisz asked if there were any questions or concerns. There being no discussion the Authority moved on to the next item on the agenda, it was noted there was no motion as it was approved in the annual meeting.

4.) Report of Executive Director:

Mr. Miller noted he's been working with the city's auditors department to bring the WRA's financials into the accounts of the city. He felt this would be advisable to have this under the control of the auditing department as there will be a lot going on with the financials of the W.R.A., the W.R.A. would have to follow the city's procedures. If the financials didn't get turned over to the city the W.R.A. would have to hire an independent auditor to review their financials. If this is transferred to the city's auditing department, the city would use their auditor for the W.R.A. as well. He further noted it is his intention not to expend any additional W.R.A. funds until the transaction has been completed.

Member Woodson MOTIONED, seconded by Member Parks to authorize the Executive Director to move the W.R.A. accounts to the city's financial side.

All in favor.

5.) Unfinished business.

a.) Discussion and possible vote on entering into negotiations with a preferred developer for Elm Street Urban Renewal project.

Executive Director Miller stated at the last meeting two presentations were made. Both presentations were good.

Mr. Miller gave a brief recap of the score sheets.

Arch Communities had a score of 297

Domus Inc. had a score of 263.

Three members scored Arch Communities higher, one member scored Domus higher.



The main differences between the two proposals was the inclusion of market rate housing that was referenced as a difference, as well as the approach to commercial. Another factor that was mentioned was the members expressed they are familiar with the work of Domus and know they would deliver a quality project while Arch is more of an unknown.

Mr. Miller recommended that they do not vote today, he suggested they could possibly hold a special meeting. Mr. Miller noted he received an E Mail relative to the opinions from the ethics commission regarding the inclusion of 2 of the consultants that are listed on the Arch Communities proposal. He further noted the responsibility of the ethics is not on the W.R.A.

Chair Witalisz inquired what would be required in the future. A few items mentioned was a working meeting. One of the developers is looking to give the city money for the land while another are looking for a TIF. What would the difference between a TIF and the purchasing of the land? Mr. Miller noted he would speak to the Assessor's Department.

Mr. Miller also noted there would be 2 tiered agreements, one would be a memorandum of agreement with terms generalized as to the responsibilities of the WRA and the developer, following that would be a joint development agreement. The memorandum of agreement would spell out what the developer and the city's responsibilities would be.

Mr. Annino noted the initial decision should be who the developer would be and then it would be opened up for negotiations or questions about the proposals.

Mr. Miller noted he had concerns regarding the proposal for Arch being 60 units and he wasn't sure if there is the ability to absorb 60 units in the downtown.

Chair Witalisz suggested inviting the Mayor to participate in the discussion. Mr. Miller suggested it makes sense to have one or two members to meet outside of an open meeting in order to get the Mayors feelings regarding the project as well as how many units can be handled, he felt there needs to be more of an internal process.

A special meeting to be held the week of the 17th. Meeting scheduled for Thursday, February 20th, 2020. Items to be reviewed.

- Review of ethics
- Site density, site plan, capacity of local interest in size of project
- Parking impacts
- Meeting with mayor, Chair and someone else.
- Negotiated strategy
- Draft resolution for vote



- Financial side, auditing, modeling
- TIF's review
- Pay back model from mass works and city
- Transfer for a dollar impact on responsibility to impact on state
- Accessed brownfield money from Mass Development
- Expectation and obligation

New business?

Mural? Mr. Parks updated members the owner of the sign shop has been in and out of the hospital.

Member Woodson MOTIONED, seconded by Member Parks to adjourn at 8:49.

