ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Regular Meeting
Thursday November 3, 2022 5:00pm
City Hall West Meeting Room 1 – 111 North Main St.

ATTENDEES: Mayor Caggiano, Council Member Panioto, Commissioners Schmelder, Goldwasser, Mills, Verikas, Massarelli, Hick, and Rasmussen-Tuller.

ABSENT: None

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing and PR Specialist; Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator; Andrew Armstrong, Assistant City Planner; Sharon Arsego, Sr. Admin. Assistant

GUESTS: Charlie Talmadge and Gino Carrier from the Carrier Group

I. Call to Order

Mayor Caggiano began the meeting at 5:03PM and led the room in The Pledge of Allegiance. This was followed by a moment of silence in remembrance of the tragic events of October 12th, 2022, in remembrance of Lt. Dustin Demonte, Sgt. Alex Hamzy, and all of those affected, including City residents.

II. Public Participation

Mayor Caggiano invited members of the public to address the Board and no one on Zoom requested to speak. The Mayor is holding this space for visitors from the Carrier Group that will address the Board in person for Agenda item V. New Business A. Enterprise Zone Discussion: 238 and 222 Main Street.

III. Minutes – October 6, 2022

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to accept the Minutes from the meeting of October 6, 2022. Commissioner Goldwasser made the motion to accept the Minutes and Commissioner Schmelder seconded the motion. All members voted in favor and the minutes were accepted into record.

IV. Consent Agenda

A. Communications
B. Economic Development Grants/Marketing Report

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to accept the Consent Agenda. Commissioner Hick made a motion to file and the motion was seconded by Commissioner Mills. All members voted in favor and the report was accepted into record.

V. New Business

A. Enterprise Zone Discussion: 238 and 222 Main Street

Justin Malley continued the conversation of the Funck and Eagle buildings which are owned by Bristol Health and which the Carrier Group wants to purchase for development. The concern is the tax abatement for these buildings while currently developing another City property. Bristol Health needs the properties sold to realize some other goals. Carrier Group worked out an option that allows for staggered tax abatement at both properties and the process allows them to bring it before the ECD Board for consideration. There was discussion and questions about the Motion and the tax ramifications among the Board. Charlie Talmadge and Gino Carrier were present for the discussion.

Commissioner Schmelder read the Motions which were seconded by Commissioner Hicks. Commissioner Goldwasser recused himself from the vote due to an immediate family member being an employee of Bristol Health. All members voted in favor and the Motions were approved.

-- "Whereas, the properties known as 238 Main Street, 222 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street are located within the boundaries of the Enterprise Zone established by the City of Bristol and State of Connecticut;

Whereas, Carrier Construction, Inc., or its assigns to be majority controlled by Carrier Construction, Inc., intends to purchase 238 Main Street, 222 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, and 29 Prospect Street with the intention of converting the vacant commercial buildings to market-rate apartment housing with the possible integration of elder support services;

Whereas, per Article XIV, Section 18-200, of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, assessments on multifamily residential real property within the Enterprise Zone which is improved to the extent of $20,000 per unit or complete retrofit of the apartments, whichever is less, with all units being upgraded, are eligible to be fixed for a period of seven (7) years from the time of such improvement and shall defer any increase in assessment attributable to such improvements according to the following schedule:
Year 1 (100% deferral), Year 2 (100% deferral), Year 3 (50% deferral), Year 4 (40% deferral), Year 5 (30% deferral), Year 6 (20% deferral), Year 7 (10% deferral).

In addition, per Article XIV, Section 18-203(g) any owner of real property who agrees to rehabilitate such property or construct new multi-family rented housing or cooperative housing on such property located in the rehabilitation area herein designated may, in accordance with provisions of Section 12-65e of General Statutes, make application to the city for an agreement to fix the assessment on the property, during the period not to exceed three (3) years of rehabilitation or construction and for a deferral of any increase in assessment attributable to such rehabilitation or construction…

I hereby make a motion: Under the guidelines of Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, and pending the legal acquisition of the subject properties by Carrier Construction, Inc. or its assigns to be majority controlled by Carrier Construction, Inc. for purposes of converting the subject properties to multifamily housing with the possible integration of elder support services, to approve the following Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for the properties known as 238 Main Street, 13 Prospect Street, 19 Prospect Street, 23 Prospect Street, 29 Prospect Street:

Construction Year #1 (period to begin January 1, 2023): 100% real property abatement

Construction Year #2: 100% real property abatement

Construction Year #3: 100% real property abatement

Year #1 (period to begin following issuance of a certificate of occupancy for multifamily housing with a potential elder care component at the subject properties of this motion): 100% real property abatement attributable to property improvements

Year #2: 100% real property abatement

Year #3: 50% real property abatement

Year #4: 40% real property abatement

Year #5: 30% real property abatement

Year #6: 20% real property abatement

Year #7: 10% real property abatement

I hereby make a motion: Under the guidelines of Article XIV of the City of Bristol Code of Ordinances, and pending the legal acquisition of the subject properties by Carrier Construction, Inc. or its assigns to be majority controlled by Carrier Construction, Inc. for purposes of converting the subject property to multifamily housing with the possible integration of elder support services, to approve the following Enterprise Zone tax abatement schedule for the property known as 222 Main street:

Construction Year #1 (period to begin January 1, 2023): 100% real property abatement

Construction Year #2: 100% real property abatement

Construction Year #3: 100% real property abatement

Year #1 (period to begin following issuance of a certificate of occupancy for multifamily housing with a potential elder care component at the subject property): 100% real property abatement attributable to property improvements

Year #2: 100% real property abatement

Year #3: 50% real property abatement

Year #4: 40% real property abatement

Year #5: 30% real property abatement

Year #6: 20% real property abatement

Year #7: 10% real property abatement

B. 234 Riverside Avenue

The Board agreed to defer this item to discuss **V. New Business C. Bristol All Heart Website** first. They will revisit the 234 Riverside Avenue item later in the meeting in the interest of Staff participation with Executive Session included today.

C. Bristol All Heart Website

Justin Malley advised that most sites have a five year shelf life and the City's site is past that. It's inefficient and not intuitive. Dawn Nielsen spoke that the original plan for the site was to promote the All Heart brand. That's been established and it's time to move forward. (a)squaredstudio Web Design has provided a quote to elevate the site including making it more user friendly on multiple platforms (ie: smart phones) and more modernized in general. The focus now is Economic and Community Development and living and working in Bristol. Justin also noted the upgrade will add efficiency for the ECD staff maintaining and updating the site. Commissioner Goldwasser spoke in support of the necessary streamlining. Commissioner Mills asked for analytics on traffic driven to the site.

Commissioner Goldwasser read the following Motion which was seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. Council Member Panioto asked to consider the future of a mobile app for the site. All members voted in favor of the Motion and it was approved.

-- "To authorize the transfer of up to $16,000 from the Economic Development Expenses Account to an account to fund the update of the "Bristol All Heart" website."

The Board agreed to next discuss Agenda item **IX. Committee Reports B. CDBG Policy Committee Report.**

IX. Committee Reports

B. CDBG Policy Committee

Commissioner Schmelder reported $40,000 in remaining funds set aside from the Cares Act. The decision was made to make them available to recipients with Covid specific needs through an established application process. These are time dependent and would allow for one year to allocate them in 2023. Commissioner Schmelder made the motion to approve the CDBG Policy Committee Report and proposal for the Cares Act Funds. The Motion was unanimously approved without further discussion.

At this time the Mayor moved to adjourn to meet in Executive Session. The motion was put forth by Commissioner Schmelder and seconded by Commissioner Rasmussen-Tuller with all in agreement. Executive Session began at 5:43pm.

VI. Executive Session

A. Downtown Grant Applications

The Board reconvened from Executive Session at 6:35pm. A motion to table the application for CT Ears was made by Mayor Caggiano and seconded by Commissioner Hicks. The motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Schmelder read the motion to approve the application for Evolve My Office (Discount Office Solutions). The motion carried unanimously to approve the grant.

Evolve My Office

-- To approve a Downtown Grant of up to $70,000 to Discount Office Solutions, LLC – representing up to $60,000 as a 50% match for “permanent building improvements” associated with the redevelopment of 80 South Street into a furniture retail and distribution facility, and up to $10,000 for the addition of 10 full-time employment positions associated with said redevelopment project, and to refer to the Board of Finance for information.

Commissioner Goldwasser made the motion to return to return to Agenda item **V. New Business B. 234 Riverside Avenue.**

V. New Business

B. 234 Riverside Avenue

Justin Malley reviewed the Fuel Cell project proposed for this location. A Letter of Comment from the City is needed as part of the application process for the State. The fuel cell developer was unable to attend tonight’s meeting. The deadline for this proposed letter is mid-December. The letter clearly outlines the City’s requirements for the property aesthetics among other concerns. The request today is to review the letter and it will be voted on at the December 2022 Board Meeting.

C. BOF Transfer Request

Commissioner Goldwasser read the motion for the BOF Transfer Request. Justin Malley apologized because it had to go to BOF first and then the Board due to a timing issue. All members voted in favor and the motion was approved.

-- To authorize the transfer of $75,000 from “contingency” to “environmental engineering” within the “894 Middle Street” account to fund continued environmental work at 894 Middle Street.

E. Downtown Update

Justin Malley noted that the Downtown Update as submitted is fairly detailed. As such, Commissioner Hick motioned to accept the report. All members were in favor and the report was received into record.

VII. New Business by Commissioners

No business was presented.

VIII. Old Business by Commissioners

No business was presented.

IX. Committee Reports

C. City Council Member Report

No business was presented.

X. Adjournment

Mayor Caggiano requested a motion to adjourn. Commissioner Schmelder made the motion and it was seconded by Commissioner Hick. All members approved the motion and the meeting adjourned at 6:41PM.

Respectfully Submitted,
Sharon Arsego
Recording Secretary