

## SOSNA Board meeting

April 27, 2005

### Meeting Minutes

Board members in attendance: Matt Corcoran, Richard Gliniak, Stephanie Greene, Ann Hoskins-Brown (Chair), John McHugh, Sharon Melvin, Tony Moretti, Marni Showell

Others in attendance: David Feldman (Executive Director)

The meeting was called to Order at 7:10 by the Chair, Ann Hoskins-Brown.

John McHugh made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Rich Gliniak, which was passed unanimously.

### **Finance Report**

Tony Moretti provided summaries of the items in his written report.

**Thrift Shop update:** Ann Hoskins-Brown presented an update on the Thrift shop closeout, provided by the NAC Director. The landlord has not yet responded to the letter sent informing him of SOSNA vacating the shop. The NAC Director coordinated community services workers to clear out the shop after the closing sale.

**Start of Bookkeeper:** The part time bookkeeper is to start on Monday. In order for him to undertake his work, he needs to have the checkbook with blank checks and stubs, a list of outstanding checks and all outstanding check requests in the office. The role of the bookkeeper was described, how this will effect the responsibilities of staff with regard to preparing OHCD invoices. It was further explained that the cost of the bookkeeper is fully reimbursable by OHCD.

**First Republic Bank Fees:** Tony Moretti has contacted the bank and obtained an agreement to have all future bank fees waived, and is working on having fees assessed to date rescinded.

**CDC Borrowing:** The issue of borrowing from SOSNA CDC to manage cash flow was discussed, in particularly the most recent loan from the CDC. Rich Gliniak made a motion that is if SOSNA desires to borrow funds from the CDC in the future, the Board must first approve the specific loan. This was seconded by Matt Corcoran. There was discussion about allowing the Executive Committee to approve borrowing in urgent situations, but Matt Corcoran pointed out that the by-laws already allow this. Ann Hoskins-Brown explained the process for a credit line that is available at reasonable terms for NAC cash flow. The motion was approved, with one dissent and one member not voting.

### **LaSalle Non-Profit Center**

Due to a miscommunication between LaSalle Non-Profit Center and the William Penn Foundation, LaSalle needs to resubmit their request to William Penn Foundation for funding of strategic planning process.

### **Universal-Development at 17<sup>th</sup> and Carpenter Streets**

Stanley Perry of Universal sent over materials regarding the development. David Feldman reviewed the status of acquisition and project development. The following points were related:

- Although PHA has approved disposition of properties on the local Board level, PHA has not yet applied to HUD for their approval of the disposition, a process that could take as little as two, but possibly over six months to complete;

- Project funding commitment from The Reinvestment Fund has expired, so new application would have to be made for financing;
- The number of “market rate” units would be increased from three to seven to maintain sales prices of “affordable” units, reducing the number of “affordable” units produced;
- The development still needs approval from City Council, which would be extremely difficult to obtain before Council recesses for the summer.

There was discussion about alternate development proposals for these properties. David Feldman gave a brief synopsis of the RDA review and approval process for development. The discussion reviewed issues of parking, about Universal’s track record as a developer, their current projects, and concerns about affordability of the houses. After prolonged discussion about potential design revisions, it was proposed to have a design “charette”, involving local architects, planners and designers to explore alternative development layouts and home designs. Tony Moretti and John McHugh agreed to contact local architects, including Sean O’Rourke and Jim Campbell, about the possibility of organizing a design charette.

The property at 1627 Christian Street was discussed in relation to the development at 17<sup>th</sup> and Carpenter, and in light of the letter from the Council President’s office to the Executive Director of the RDA. There was discussion about development options, including sale or rental housing, and possible mixed use, with SOSNA moving its office to the ground floor, with rental housing above. This property was the last one in the “Doctor’s Row” development funded through the RDA. The other properties were rehabbed for sale to moderate income home buyers, with an owner’s unit and a rental unit, with the rental unit providing the owner income to offset mortgage cost. Tony Moretti agreed to contact RDA legal counsel, Jane Duffy, to find out what uses would be allowable for this property when it is acquired from the RDA.

### **Pathmark**

The original proposal submitted to the Commerce Department was reviewed, along with the original project budget. The tax credit partnership has now been formally, permanently transferred from SOSNA CDC to SOSNA, Inc.

A list of recommendations was proposed for the economic development program:

- Tying together corridors and business associations
- Having a dedicated staff person for economic development
- Re-instituting sidewalk cleaning
- Focus on leveraging State and Federal funding programs
- Undertaking an inventory of existing commercial and industrial property
- Identifying resources available for commercial and industrial businesses
- Having a summer intern, most likely a planning student
- Develop a role for SOSNA as an informational resources center

It was agreed that during the first year of the economic development program, it would be important to build relationships with businesses. There was particularly focused discussion on the role of Washington Avenue, as a connector to adjacent neighborhoods, how it abuts residential areas, the current development pressures on properties along this corridor.

It was agreed to establish an Economic Development Committee, with Rich Gliniak coordinating within the Board, and Tony Moretti, John McHugh and Matt Corcoran reaching out to Washington Avenue and South Street business associations. John McHugh made a motion to identify a graduate student to inventory commercial corridor properties, and work on proposals for economic development agenda, seconded by Sharon Melvin, and approved without dissent.

## **Personnel**

Jennifer passed the Housing Counseling exam, and is now certified as a Housing Counselor

Susan has completed one third of the total units of service required by OHCD, although she is only two months into her twelve month contract.

Sonyia has resigned as of last Friday, effective immediately. Personnel committee members, with Executive Director, will be conducting an exit interview this coming Monday.

The Personnel committee met earlier today to discuss hiring to fill the position of administrative support that Sonyia held. The possibility of hiring a fulltime administrative staff person was reviewed, to serve both the NAC and Economic Development programs. The budget will be reviewed with the Treasurer and Finance Committee before taking any further steps towards filling this position.

## **Community Programs**

Rich Gliniak visited Dixon House, and reports that white roof program is still available to neighborhood residents.

## **Community Gardens**

The Chair reported that the negotiations for the garden at 20<sup>th</sup> and Catharine have been exhausted, and there is no longer any possibility of saving this garden. The plant rescue has been an ongoing effort, with many plants moved to a lot at Grays' Ferry Avenue, and some planted at Chester Arthur School.

Negotiations are still active for creating a community garden at 22<sup>nd</sup> and Montrose/Carpenter Streets, which will require having properties swapped with Greater St. Matthews to assemble contiguous lots along 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.

At Gray's Ferry and Carpenter Streets, SOSNA is still working to assemble up to six properties for a garden. John McHugh will follow up with the City.

The possibility for greening at the Arthur School was discussed. The University of the Arts is willing to undertake garden design. The AIA's Community Design Collaborative could also be engaged for preliminary design and feasibility services. A point person was discussed for the Arthur School, and it was recommended that this be someone already involved with the Schools Initiative. It was also suggested that this effort be connected with Larry Schaeffer's ongoing work with Safe Corridors to Schools.

## **Resources**

The Executive Director will send out contact information on resources for commercial corridor programs.

A motion to adjourn was made by Rich Gliniak, seconded by Matt Corcoran, approved without dissent

Meeting was adjourned at 9:50 PM.

## **Post meeting note:**

Rich Gliniak circulated a Motion for the Board to accept the OHCD Housing Counseling contract for February 2005-January 2006, which was accepted via email by a quorum of the Board.

Respectfully submitted

David W. Feldman  
Interim Executive Director