

ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MINUTES – Regular Meeting
Thursday, April 2, 2020, 5:00 P.M.
Council Chambers

ATTENDEES: Mayor Zoppo-Sassu, Council Member Preleski;
Commissioners Hick, Schmelder, Goldwasser, Rasmussen-Tuller (video)
Commissioners Cyr (on phone), Mills (on phone),

STAFF PRESENT: Justin Malley, Executive Director; Dawn Nielsen, Marketing & P.R. Specialist (video),
Dawn Leger, Grants Administrator; David Sgro, Housing & Project Specialist

GUEST: Paul Kuchay, KPG Automation, LLC (video)

- I. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu called the meeting to order at 5:06 p.m.
- II. Public Participation – None
- III. **Commissioner Goldwasser made a motion to accept the minutes of March 5, 2020, seconded by Commissioner Schmelder. The commissioners voted in favor and the minutes were accepted.**
- IV. New Business

A. 229 Technology Park Site Plan/Building Plan

Justin discussed the HOME2 project. Staff did not find any exceptions with the 229 Technology Park guidelines.

Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to approve the site plan/building plan dated March 18, 2020 (revised) from Bristol Hotel 2, LLC, for the development of an approximately 67,000 square foot HOME2 hotel and approximately 43,000 square foot conference center on Lots 1, 5, 6, and 7 as consistent with the 229 Technology Park Design Guidelines and Regulations, Revised January 2020.

B. Enterprise Zone – 27 Center Street

Justin recommended that this project be tabled until next Month.

Commissioner Schmelder made a motion to table the Enterprise Zone application for 27 Center Street until the May 2020 meeting, seconded by Commissioner Cyr. All present voted in favor. Motion passed.

C. 12-65b – The Residences on Main

Justin summarized this project. He explained the benefits to both the company and to the City.

Council Member Preleski made a motion to utilize authority granted under Connecticut General Statute 12-65b to approve a real property tax assessment fixing agreement for Carrier Construction, Inc., or its assigns, contingent on the execution of a certificate of occupancy for 32 market-rate apartment units in the area of Main Street and Summer Street. Said real property assessment fixing agreement shall be subject to conditions identified in Connecticut General Statutes Section 12-65b and shall take the following form:

Tax Year 1-10 following Certification of Occupancy: 50% real property tax abatement. Commissioner Schmelder seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

D. Economic Development Grant Request

Justin introduced Paul Kuchay from KPG Automation. Paul summarized the history and creation of this company at 231 Century Drive. He described the business, the product line, and customer base. At 5:30 p.m. Mr. Kuchay excused himself from the meeting and the meeting went into Executive Session.

The committee discussed the grant request in Executive Session.

After returning from Executive Session, the following action was made:

Council Member Preleski made a motion to award an Economic Development Grant to KPG Automation, LLC, in the amount of up to \$35,000 for job creation: up to \$20,000 for full-time positions upon commencing operations in Bristol at \$1,000 per position, and up to \$15,000 for additional full-time positions created (\$1,000 for each full-time position filled by a Bristol resident and \$750 for each full-time position filled by individuals that reside outside of Bristol) and to forward this to the Board of Finance for their information. Commissioner Goldwasser seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed.

V. New Business by Commissioners

There was no new business by Commissioners.

VI. Old Business by Commissioners

There was no old business by Commissioners.

VII. Any Other Business

A. City Council Liaison Report

Council Member Preleski spoke about small business aid and has been meeting with Justin on this topic. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu has also been working with Mayor Stewart on this issue. Justin has proposed an idea to accelerate the payments to companies currently approved for tax abatements. Mayor Zoppo-Sassu clarified this further and said it would be restricted to those the City is currently doing business with (upon review) and the proposal will be reviewed with Corporation Counsel. Justin provided an example. The Mayor added that their current financial position would be reviewed, and clawback provisions would be made in case a company goes out of business. This would be presented only as an option and limited to companies which only have a couple of years left on their abatement. Corporation Counsel is to be consulted and this item will be brought back to the board. Justin explained where the funds would come from.

B. Committee Reports – Policy Committee

The Bristol Historical Society had funds approved for a project and now that project has changed so the funds needs to be put back to the account and a transfer is now requested to allow those funds to be placed into the Residential Rehabilitation Program.

Council Member Preleski made a motion to approve the transfer of \$10,000 from the CDBG Public Facilities account to the Housing Rehabilitation program. Commissioner Hick seconded the motion. All present voted in favor and the motion passed. The Mayor abstained.

Commissioner Schmelder reported that the Policy Committee met a couple of weeks ago and finalized their recommendations for the CDBG allocations for next year and they are now out for public comment. The board cannot vote on these until after the public comment period. Dawn Leger reported that there was an ad in the paper with the proposed allocations and the 5 Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Plan drafts are on our City web page. There will also have to be a Public Hearing on the 5 Year Plan. After the end of the 30-day comment period the Annual Plan will be brought back to the board for a vote and then forwarded to the City Council for a vote as well.

Dawn has received two Conflict of Interest reports. Council Member Preleski and Mayor Zoppo-Sassu have conflicts for the year 2020-21. Dawn read aloud those details as included in a letter to the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development dated April 2, 2020 (attached) for public disclosure. A copy of this letter is on file in the ECD office.

The Mayor spoke about some of the department's current projects:

- Dawn Nielsen is working on ads for the Bristol Press.
 - She is working on a list of restaurants with details on their current services.
 - There will be an ad to showcase the work done on economic incentives.
- The ECD may be doing an All Heart post highlighting volunteers.
 - To highlight the many organizations providing meals for St. Vincent de Paul.
 - The City has a list of over 100 volunteers from the City who are performing various functions during this difficult time.

VIII. Adjournment

Commissioner Rassmussen-Tuller made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:02 p.m. The motion was seconded by Council Member Preleski, all present voted in favor and the meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,



Christine Cooper, Recording Secretary



April 2, 2020

Ms. Millicent Meadows
CPD Representative
U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development
One Corporate Center, 10th Floor
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Conflict of Interest, HUD Regulations 24 CFR Ch. V, 570.611; Community Development Block Grant

Dear Ms. Meadows,

The Economic & Community Development (ECD) Board has responsibility for economic development as well as oversight of the CDBG program. Its Policy Committee makes preliminary CDBG funding recommendations for each Annual Plan.

In accordance with the HUD regulation referenced above, there are two individuals on the ECD Board, Atty. David Preleski and Mayor Ellen Zoppo-Sassu, who submitted statements concerning a Conflict of Interest with an applicant for Community Development Block Grant funds. The City of Bristol requests exceptions for Atty. Preleski and Mayor Zoppo-Sassu for program year 2020-21.

- 1) The threshold provisions were met and are documented separately.
 - a. A disclosure of the nature of the conflict, accompanied by an assurance that there has been public disclosure of the conflict and a description of how the public disclosure was made; and
 - b. An opinion of the recipient's (City of Bristol) attorney that the interest for which the exception is sought would not violate State or local law.
- 2) The seven factors to be considered for Atty. Preleski and Mayor Zoppo-Sassu are addressed below:

Atty. David Preleski is a partner in the law firm Vitrano, Preleski & Wynn LLC. He receives income from legal representation provided to the Bristol Housing Authority by a member of the firm, Atty. Salvatore Vitrano. Atty. Preleski is a member of the Bristol City Council who serves as the liaison to the ECD Board. He is not a member of the Policy Committee and therefore did not participate in the selection of applicants to receive allocations of CDBG funds in 2020-2021.

- 1) There is an extensive Citizen Participation process to review proposals for CDBG funding; and to seek input on preliminary and final decisions on each proposal received. The ECD Policy Committee makes its preliminary funding recommendations based on a set of priorities established in the 5-Year Consolidated Plan. Atty. Preleski is not a member of the ECD Policy Committee. Neither Atty. Preleski nor the law firm of Vitrano, Preleski & Wynn LLC have ever received compensation from CDBG funds.
- 2) This factor does not apply.
- 3) This factor does not apply.

- 4) Atty. Preleski does not serve on the Policy Committee of the ECD Board. He will recuse himself from votes that are taken for ECD Board approval of the CDBG Annual Action Plan for 2020-21.
- 5) Komanetsky Estates, managed by the Bristol Housing Authority (a client of Atty. Vitrano), has received various CDBG awards in the past few years, but Atty. Preleski has only recently been appointed to serve as a City Council liaison to the ECD Board.
- 6) Residents of Komanetsky Estates would suffer undue harm if they could not benefit from CDBG funding for capital improvements to their facility. The special population involved is frail elderly, low income residents of this Congregate Living facility.
- 7) Atty. Preleski is not aware of the amount of income generated by the Bristol Housing Authority account for the firm of which he is a partner, but he acknowledges that he receives a portion of those funds as part of his overall share in the company.

Ellen Zoppo-Sassu is Mayor of the City of Bristol, and during her tenure as Mayor, she also serves as Chair of the ECD Board. She is the chair of the Board of Public Works, a department that applied for CDBG funding to rebuild sidewalks in the Opportunity Zone. She has also disclosed past board service and volunteer relationships with several other applicants in the 2020-2021 CDBG funding cycle, including For Goodness Sake and the McCabe-Waters Little League.

- 1) There is an extensive Citizen Participation process to review proposals for CDBG funding; and to seek input on preliminary and final decisions on each proposal received. The ECD Policy Committee makes its preliminary funding recommendations based on a set of priorities established in the 5-Year Consolidated Plan. The Mayor is not a member of the ECD Policy Committee, and therefore did not participate in voting on allocations for funding in this cycle.
- 2) This factor does not apply.
- 3) This factor does not apply.
- 4) Mayor Zoppo-Sassu does not serve on the Policy Committee of the ECD Board. She will recuse herself from the decision-making process for the ECD Board and for City Council approval of the CDBG Annual Action Plan for 2020-21.
- 5) These applicants have received CDBG awards in the past.
- 6) The Policy Committee voted to continue funding the Sidewalk Improvement program because it is an important component of the economic and community development efforts in the Opportunity Zone. The two other applicants that presented a conflict for the Mayor were not approved for funding by the Policy Committee. Regardless, the Mayor will recuse herself from the ECD Board vote to approve the CDBG allocations, as well as the City Council vote to approve the proposed Annual Action Plan in May.
- 7) Mayor Zoppo-Sassu has assured the ECD Board that she serves as a volunteer and has received no remuneration from her involvement with any non-profit organization.

Please advise if there is any information or clarification needed. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,



Dawn Leger, Ph.D.
Grants Administrator