

AGENDA FOR AN URBAN RENEWAL AUTHORITY
MEETING FOR TUESDAY, **OCTOBER 14, 2014, 7:00 PM**
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, SECOND FLOOR
MUNICIPAL BUILDING

- I. CALL TO ORDER – Councilman Mike Reynolds, Chairman
- II. ROLL CALL
- III. MINUTES – meeting held August 19, 2014
- IV. NEW BUSINESS
 1. Requesting approval to submit an application to the West Virginia Housing Development Fund for a Demolition Loan in the amount of \$500,000.00 to demolish and/or acquire vacant or dilapidated properties identified by the City's Code Department.
- V. ADJOURNMENT

The Council of the City of Parkersburg, acting in their legal capacity as the Urban Renewal Authority of the City of Parkersburg, met Tuesday, August 19, 2014, at 5:45 PM in the Council Chambers on the second floor of the Municipal Building at One Government Square, Parkersburg, WV 26101.

The meeting was called to order by its Chairman, Councilman Mike Reynolds, who presided over the meeting. The clerk noted the attendance and those present included Councilmen Nancy Wilcox, Sharon Lynch, Roger Brown, Kin Coram, JR Carpenter, John Kelly, John Rockhold, Jim Reed, and Mike Reynolds.

MINUTES -- Mr. Reed moved, seconded by Mr. Kelly, to dispense with the reading of the journal and approve the minutes from June 24, 2014, and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

DONATION REQUEST FOR 1107 13TH STREET -

MOTION - Mr. Reed moved, seconded by Mr. Carpenter to accept the property.

Development Director, Rickie Yeager, told the Authority that we received a letter asking the City to accept this property. The lot size is 30' x 103', and the ability to rebuild on the lot is not realistic, he said. The house has been gutter from the inside and is cost prohibitive for the owner to renovate. It is the recommendation of the Building Enforcement Agency for the URA to accept this donation.

Ms. Lynch asked what we would do with the property if we took it. Mr. Yeager said we were looking at other housing plans so we may be able to do something with it. The house next to it needs attention also, but it appears to be occupied. Mr. Yeager said that anytime he receives such a letter, he brings it to URA.

Mr. Reed asked if we could force the owner to do something with the property, and Mr. Tebay said we could put a demolition lien on it, or go through another procedure and have him demolish it, and then bring a judgment. The title is in the name of a gas and oil company. Collection would be a challenge, he said. It is a non-conforming lot, so we could try to combine it with another lot. At some point, we will have to demolish it whether we get money or not. The title is clear with the exception of taxes for \$42.00.

When Mr. Reed asked if this was our best option, Mr. Tebay said the owner was more cooperative than other before. Mr. Reed said we would be taking on the owner's problem. Ms. Wilcox asked if the owner had been fined, and Mr. Yeager said not that he knows. When Ms. Lynch asked about our new ordinance on registration of vacant buildings, Mr. Yeager said that program has not been set up yet, but we will be working on it soon.

Mr. Yeager said that we could continue to let the property decay, or do something about it now. Ms. Wilcox said that she has houses in her district that are worse than this one, with bigger lots that could be used.

The title may not be clear next year, Mr. Tebay stated. If they get enough complaints, it will cost \$5,000.00 to \$6,000.00 plus the filing fees and other costs if we take it through normal procedures, then pay for demolition. Ms. Wilcox said that people will start turning their houses over to the City, then we tear them down, and a family relative buys them for \$100.00.

Ms. Coram said they tried to give the property to the pink church in her district, but they were reluctant to take because they want lots connected to ones they already have. Mr. Reed said this was difficult to support, but it could start something where people turn their property over to the City.

Mr. Yeager stated that he has been getting other inquiries like that where someone purchases property at a tax sale then they don't know what to do with it.

VOTE - the motion failed as follows:

VOTING 'YES'	VOTING 'NO'
Ms. Wilcox	Ms. Lynch
Ms. Coram	Mr. Brown
Mr. Carpenter	Mr. Kelly
Mr. Rockhold	Mr. Reed
	Mr. Reynolds

The next item on the agenda was removed and not discussed concerning 1338, 1340, and 1342 St. Mary's Avenue at the request of Development Director, Rickie Yeager.

APPLICATION TO WV HOUSING DEVELOPMENT FUND - \$500,000.00.

Mr. Brown asked how long the loan would be for, and the interest rate. Mr. Yeager said it would \$500,000.00 for five years, zero interest the first year, then 2%, 3%, 4%, and 4% the next four years. He said that Mayor Newell wants to be more proactive and give incentives to private development to rehab, or do new construction. A lower amount would not give us enough money to offer to contractors to improve, he said. For a conventional bank with 3.25%, the interest paid would be \$42,000.00, and through the WVHDF the total interest would be \$30,000.00.

Previously the Housing Fund only offered loans of \$150,000.00, but they got permission to allow us to apply for \$500,000.00. We would pay \$100,000.00 the first year with no interest. Mr. Yeager said they met with local contractor this week.

When Mr. Kelly asked if we could borrow a smaller amount, Mr. Yeager said we could pay it off in three years for \$11,000.00 in interest, but we would not have the funds up front to look at other programs. Mr. Kelly stated that this

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Council would leave a legacy of tearing down homes and leaving others to pay for it. On the other side, Mr. Yeager stated we would not be able to try new programs unless they go to the general fund.

The housing market is bleak, Ms. Lynch stated, and people may be moving into our valley because of the gas and oil industry. She asked if we would be considering multi-housing, and Mr. Yeager said we would do a combination, and could use CDBG and HOME funds. Because there are income requirements with these programs, they can help achieve our affordable housing goals, he said. Ms. Lynch said she believes the WVHDF is a good program.

We would tailor our needs, Mr. Yeager stated, and there would be consequences if we do not get the project done. This is based on 180 properties we identified earlier, and four or five of those are being renovated. The application would be flexible on the exact properties.

Ms. Coram asked why we were not asking for a total of \$1,000,000.00 like we had discussed earlier, and Mr. Yeager said that we will commit \$200,000.00 to demolition and we want to do other programs, and not tear them all down at once. We want to have a plan and incentives for people to do something with these houses. They will come back to URA for permission on a demolition list, he said.

Ms. Wilcox asked who would control the money, and Mr. Yeager said it could run through URA or a line item in the general fund. If the incentives that we offer are not working, we can take the money back, he said. When she asked who was on the BEA, Mr. Tebay explained that it was spelled out in state code Chapter 8-16-2, and was created to give due process as to demolition. Under the property maintenance code, there may be more layers of processes, he said.

Since we may not put all the money to use at one time, Mr. Reed asked if we could structure it where they could draw draws to save interest. Mr. Yeager said there would be a mix with some of the banks, but he does not think there is enough support to look at a Letter of Credit of this size. Mr. Reed asked about obligating future funds, and Mr. Yeager said it would be like our Section 108, whereby we pledge revenue from the Memorial Bridge as collateral.

MOTION – Mr. Reed moved, seconded by Mr. Brown, to refer this to the finance committee, and the motion was adopted by unanimous vote.

UPDATE ON 19TH AND KEEVER – Mr. Yeager stated that we now own this property and we were going to go immediately into remediation. We will be going out for bid for a licensed remediation, he said.

With no objection from the Authority, Chairman Reynolds allowed Mother Marjorie from the pink church to speak. She said that she lives in district #4 and they are very active in their feeding program and rummage area and outreach. She has noticed generational poverty with lots of alcohol and drugs and prison. They have started a reading program for the children, whom she said were wild and out of control with no respect for adults, and they have low expectations in life. She is hoping for a different type of neighborhood, and would like for the empty lots to be a redevelopment program. 60% of the properties in her district are rentals, she said. Some of the renters are paying as much as \$800.00 per month and are stuck and cannot afford to buy a house. Our foster system in the state is overrun, she said. She asked if we could bring builders in and give them tax incentives to buy in that neighborhood. They have 20-30 people meeting every month interested in that district. They are willing to be a land bank, and they invited the National Guard in to demolish some of the properties and are trying to change the neighborhood for the children. Their idea now is the small house movement, and she asked us to look at our zoning laws to include this movement.

The meeting adjourned at 6:28 PM.

Corina Shapiro
City Clerk

Chairman, URA