



BUFFALO ERIE NIAGARA LAND IMPROVEMENT CORPORATION
BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES
July 18, 2024 – 2:00 PM
Brisbane Building Conference Room 521
403 Main St. Suite 602
Buffalo, New York 14203

Call to Order by Board Chair, Brendan Mehaffy

ATTENDANCE:

Board Members *Present*: Brendan Mehaffy, Scott Bylewski, Daniel Castle,
Delano Dowell, Jeremy Toth, Catherine Amdur,
Karen Utz

Board Members *Excused*: Adam McNeill, Cavette Chambers, Oluwole
McFoy

BENLIC Counsel *Present*: John Sidd

BENLIC Staff: Jocelyn Gordon, Alexis Duwe, Benjamin Brown,
Matthew Azzano

HAND OUTS:

Agenda; Minutes of June 2024 Board Meeting; June 2024 Treasurer's Report; **Resolution #2024-16** Approval of Neighborhood Infill Architectural and Engineering Services – ARPA Infill Initiative; **Resolution #2024-17** Bid Approval – Complete Rehabilitation of 149 Northland, Buffalo; **Resolution #2024-18** Disposition – 473 Monroe, Evans Side Lot Sale.

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Roll Call

2. Approval of June 2024 Minutes:

The minutes of the June 27th, 2024, Board of Directors Meeting were presented and reviewed.

A motion to approve the June 2024 minutes was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Karen Utz, and unanimously carried as approved.

3. Treasurer's Report:

BENLIC provided the June 2024 Treasurer's Report in advance of the meeting. Executive Director Jocelyn Gordon presented the June 2024 Treasurer's Report. No corrections were offered.

A motion to approve the June Treasurer's report was made by Catherine Amdur, seconded by Jeremy Toth, and unanimously carried as approved.

4. **Resolution #2024-16** Approval of Neighborhood Infill Architectural and Engineering Services – ARPA Infill Initiative

The Neighborhood Infill Architectural and Engineering Services – ARPA Infill Initiative Request for Proposals was released on June 7th, 2024, with a submission deadline of June 21st, 2024. Four proposals were received, and the two complete proposals were presented to the Board along with their proposed hours and rates. During the June 2024 Board meeting, BENLIC presented the resolution to approve a professional and qualified architectural services firm. The Board requested additional time to review and a staff-graded rubric to clarify the differences between the four proposals. The resolution was tabled at that time.

Peter Dechert, of Buffalo Construction Consultants (BCC), reviewed the proposals and was present to answer questions. A staff-graded rubric was completed by BENLIC staff and Board Member Catherine Amdur. The results were shared with the Board. The two incomplete proposals were ranked significantly lower than the two complete proposals. The highest ranked proposal was from HHL Architects with an average score of 86 out of 100.

Executive Director Jocelyn Gordon reported to the Board that BENLIC has been in contact with both firms to clarify the proposals. Both firms accepted a \$150,000 cap for the construction administration fee, as much of the construction administration will be performed by BCC. Peter Dechert confirmed that some costs in construction administration will be reduced by the proximity of many of the construction sites as well as the economy of scale of building the

houses simultaneously. Additional information was received explaining how HHL's subcontractors' hours were accounted for in the proposal.

A motion to approve the proposal by HHL Architects at a guaranteed maximum price of \$684,225 was made by Catherine Amdur, seconded by Jeremy Toth, and unanimously carried as approved.

5. **Resolution #2024-17 Bid Approval – 149 Northland, Buffalo – Complete Rehab Project**

The vacant two-family house located at 149 Northland Avenue was acquired by BENLIC via the 2022 Erie County In-Rem Vacant Auction. This property was determined to be a good candidate for full rehabilitation. It is located in the Cold Springs/Hamlin Park neighborhood. The replacement of the roof, windows, and exterior doors of this property was awarded to Aurora Window Systems & Contracting in February 2024 in order to protect the house from further deterioration. The full rehabilitation was released in a later bid package and not brought to the board until now due to lack of funding for the extensive work.

With the awarding of \$676,578 in additional funding from NYS HCR as part of the LBI Phase II grant, the funds necessary to award the complete rehabilitation have been received. Two bids were received. BENLIC staff recommends awarding the bid to the lowest responsible bidder, Buccilli Renovations.

A motion to approve the bid from Buccilli Renovations for \$305,000 was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Karen Utz, and unanimously carried as approved.

6. **Resolution #2024-18 Disposition – 473 Monroe, Evans – Side Lot Sale**

BENLIC acquired 473 Monroe Avenue via the 2022 Erie County In-Rem Auction. The vacant and dilapidated residential structure was demolished in April 2024. The property was then marketed to neighboring homeowners as part of BENLIC's side lot sales program. BENLIC received one offer from the owner of the adjacent property for \$8,500. Ronald Raab, owner of 481 Monroe Avenue, plans to landscape the lot upon purchase and install a flagpole.

A motion to approve the disposition of 473 Monroe Avenue to Ronald Raab was made by Delano Dowell, seconded by Daniel Castle, and unanimously carried as approved.

7. **Executive Director's Report**

Jocelyn Gordon informed the Board of the status of recent BENLIC activities.

The construction of the first home that is part of the Adams Street Infill Initiative will begin in early August. Buccilli Renovations has received permission to begin digging and pouring the foundation for one home. The remaining permits are expected to be issued after the closing of the financing with NYS HCR and Evans Bank.

NYS HCR awarded BENLIC with an additional \$676,578 in Land Bank Initiative Phase II funding to complete two additional demolitions and a complete rehab.

Preliminary house plans are being prepared by EcoLogic Studios with BENLIC input for the construction of five homes in Cheektowaga for the ARPA Infill Initiative.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made by Scott Bylewski, seconded by Catherine Amdur, and unanimously carried as approved.

NEXT MEETING: Board of Directors Thursday, September 19th, 2024, 2:00 p.m.

Location: Brisbane Building Conference Room 521, 403 Main St. Suite 602, Buffalo, New York 14203

Recorded by: Matthew Azzano, BENLIC Staff
Submitted for Approval: Jocelyn Gordon, Executive Director

Adopted by BENLIC Board Members on September 19, 2024