

TRUMBULL HOUSING AUTHORITY

Special Board of Commissioners Meeting

October 13, 2014

Commissioners Present: Chairman Janice Kopchik, Vice-Chairman Linda Nassrah, Assistant Treasurer Susan Fatse, and Treasurer Thelma Burr

Also Present: Executive Director Harriet Polansky

Commissioners Absent: Secretary Suzanne Donofrio

The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Chairman Kopchik. It was immediately followed by the Roll Call and the Pledge of Allegiance. The meeting took place in the Community Room, Stern Village, 200 Hedgehog Circle, Trumbull, CT.

Ms. Polansky introduced Ms. Paulette Mack as Stern Village's new Resident-Services Coordinator and stated that Ms. Mack will eventually meet with all of the Stern Village residents.

Past Minutes

No minutes were voted upon at this meeting.

Treasurer's Report

No Treasurer's Report was given at this meeting.

Executive Director's Report

Ms. Harriet Polansky stated that this is a very exciting time at Stern Village as it embarks on a much-needed revitalization project. Stern Village has not seen any substantial improvements in almost 40 years and needs to make many upgrades and improvements to the property. CHFA (CT Housing and Finance Authority) and the DOH (CT Department of Housing) are supporting Trumbull Housing Authority's efforts in making the necessary renovations.

Ms. Kim Pietrorazio, Executive Director, TOVAH, Inc. will be meeting with Stern Village residents on Tuesday, October 14, 2014, at the Resident Participation Council meeting, to explain the need for a resident-participation agreement. The Trumbull Housing Authority will be working with the residents on a vision to make THA one of the best affordable housing developments in CT.

EVALUATION PROCESS FOR ARCHITECTS

The evaluation process for architects, based on the Requests for Qualifications, started in August, 2014.

ARCHITECTURAL FIRMS FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF STERN VILLAGE

Backdrop:

1. The evaluations for the architectural firms began August, 2014.
2. Six firms submitted their proposals based on our RFQ and attended our mandatory walk-through meeting.
3. One firm dropped out and two firms did not have enough experience for the project. Three candidates were left: Quisenberry Arcari, Paul Bailey and Wiles.
4. A matrix/proposal to review costs was requested from each firm.
5. Mr. Gerhardt and Ms. Polansky met with the Millennium Group: Bruce Whitaker, Executive Director; Frank Stellato, Associate Director; and Steve Jayne, Construction Project Manager as well as with each of the three candidates for a two-hour meeting reviewing their proposals and getting acquainted with each firm.
6. A final matrix was provided that outlined a concept to measure costs. The three firms were requested to provide a cover letter showing their availability and the competing projects they would be working on.
7. An Evaluation Rubric was used to measure competencies.

Quisenberry Arcari (QA)

Tom Arcari, Principal

- Mr. Arcari's response included concepts/ideas including multi-buildings and different areas of new construction on THA property (these ideas had already been discussed at the meeting with Tom).
- Quisenberry Arcari is the most expensive.
- Quisenberry Arcari has a competing PHA project, the East Hartford Housing Authority's Veteran Terrace Revitalization Project.
- Quisenberry Arcari is located in Farmington, CT.

The firm is extremely competent and has done many CHFA/DOH deals.

Paul Bailey

Paul Bailey, Principal

- Mr. Bailey did not provide any concepts or ideas at the meeting nor did he give us any feedback on his vision for Stern Village.
- Paul Bailey is the second most expensive.
- Paul Bailey's cover letter dictated stipulations in order to meet our deadline. (I spoke to Paul Bailey on October 6th and he indicated that he was flexible.)

- Paul Bailey is located in New Haven, CT.
- This firm is extremely competent and has done many CHFA/DOH deals.

Wiles

George Wiles, Principal

Brandt J. Jobst, Architect

- Mr. Wiles' response to the RFQ included a "sketchbook" of concepts.
- At our meeting, Mr. Wiles took the initial concepts/ideas and expanded on them; their concepts appeared to make sense. In fact, we used their idea for the final matrix that was provided to all candidates.
- Wiles does not have any competing jobs and can put their emphasis on Stern Village.
- Wiles is the least expensive firm, by a significant amount.
- Wiles is located in Bridgeport, CT.

On October 7, 2014, Neil Gerhardt, Stern Village Financial Consultant, and Ms. Polansky met with George Wiles and Brandt Jobst to discuss the discrepancy in their costs for the Westside of Stern Village vs. Paul Bailey's.

- Mr. Wiles appeared to put a lot of time in during our vetting period, which lowered their cost. Wiles had already provided us with concepts/ideas that appear to make sense.
- Wiles spoke with Bill Maurer, Engineer for the Town of Trumbull about wetlands. Mr. Maurer provided Mr. Wiles with information about storm drainage requirements and wetlands, which were taken into account when they factored their costs.
- Mr. Wiles understands the dynamics of the Town and has attended many Planning and Zonings meetings for other projects.
- Wiles is only accounting for 1-4 different types of apartment designs which will be implemented into the Eastside of Stern Village and carried through to the Westside. This also accounts for their costs being significantly lower.

Wiles is a smaller firm and doesn't have as much overhead as the others. George Wiles and Brandt Jobst are extremely personable and appear to be very competent. Wiles Architects is also conveniently located in Bridgeport.

Mr. Wiles stated that he knew Sam Stern, the founder of Stern Village, and is very familiar with its history as his mother-in-law once lived here. Wiles has a good deal of experience with the Millennium Group. The units are at the end of their life cycle and many improvements need to be made. Entrance ways need to be made more accommodating for the residents. Wiles will create "visuals" for the residents and added that the costs of renovating Stern Village will increase as time goes by.

Millennium Group has worked with all of these firms and is currently working with Paul Bailey and George Wiles. Bruce and Frank feel that each firm is excellent. George Whitaker and Frank Stellato recused themselves in making the final selection.

Mr. Edward Lavernoch, Director of Economic Development, Town of Trumbull, CT assisted in making this decision.

Chairman Kopchik stated that the purpose of the revitalization project was to improve the quality of the lives of Stern Village residents by making it a better place to live. We hope the State will give the project funding; the residents will not have to pay anything for this to be done. The residents should attend meetings and listen to the Board and not listen to residents who are spreading fabrications about this project. There is no hidden agenda. Residents should talk with the members of the Board when they have concerns to alleviate their fears.

Ms. Polansky stated that Wiles Architects provided many new ideas and did the most homework. The firm's concepts made sense. Wiles also has no competing jobs during the timeframe of the project and was significantly less expensive. George Wiles contacted Mr. William Maurer, Engineer, Town of Trumbull, CT to discuss the issue of wetlands at Stern Village.

Mr. Gerhardt stated that funding for this project will partially come from RAP (Residents' Assistant Payment).

Ms. Polansky stated that the project will also reduce energy bills. Stern Village residents are intelligent, helpful and concerned about their neighbors and the Stern Village community. They have great ideas. Ms. Polansky would like Stern Village to be the model public housing authority in CT. Everyone can work together to make this the best place to live. It's all about team work.

There has been quite a bit of erroneous information being disseminated to the residents at Stern Village. Hotel units will be located on the premises; no one will be moved elsewhere. Timing is critical to prepare for our meeting with the State in November and for the 1st round of funding in 2015.

Mr. Wiles stated that there will be the least amount of impact on the residents and that parking will be allocated during the construction period. Residents will not be seriously inconvenienced in any way while this project is being constructed.

Public Comment

Several Stern Village residents made statements throughout the meeting as follows:

Ms. Sandra Fisher, Mr. Joe Ventura, Ms. June Leonard, Ms. Ranea Werthman, Mr. Gus Aquino, et al expressed their concerns about the rumors that were going around concerning the Stern Village revitalization project.

Mr. Nicholas Vertucci, who has lived in Trumbull, CT for many years, stated that he has known Mr. George Wiles for a long time and commended him for the work his architectural firm, Wiles Architects, has done in the State.

A motion was made to approve George Wiles as the architectural firm for the Stern Village revitalization and redevelopment project by Chairman Kopchik. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Nassrah. The motion was unanimously approved.

Adjournment

There being no further business, a motion was made by Chairman Kopchik to adjourn the meeting. Commissioner Nassrah seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously by the commissioners. The meeting was adjourned at 10:47 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Linda Jennette
Stern Village

(These minutes are considered to be only a draft until approved at the next meeting by the Trumbull Housing Authority Board of Commissioners.)