



CITY OF FOREST PARK
URBAN REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY REGULAR MEETING

Thursday, May 11, 2023 at 5:30 PM
Council Chambers

Website: www.forestparkga.gov
Phone Number: (404) 363.2454

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
745 Forest Parkway
Forest Park, GA 30297

MINUTES

Kimberly James, Chairwoman
Eliot Lawrence, Vice Chairman
Debra Patrick, Member
Marisol Sconiers, Member
Avery Wilson, Member

MEETING NOTICE:

Due to COVID-19, CDC requirements of Masks and Social Distancing will be adhered.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME:

Chairwoman James called the Urban Redevelopment Authority meeting on May 11, 2023, to order at 5:31pm.

PRESENT:

Kimberly James
Eliot Lawrence
Debra Patrick
Marisol Sconiers
Avery Wilson

ALSO PRESENT:

Ricky Clark, Jr., City Manager
Michael Williams, City Attorney
Ed Wall, City Financial Advisor
Bobby Jinks, Public Works Director
Bruce Abraham, Economic Development Director
Charise Clay, Economic Development Staff Assistant

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

1. Approval of March 9, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to approve the March 9, 2023, meeting minutes. Avery Wilson seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

OLD BUSINESS**NEW BUSINESS:**

2. National Economic Development Week at Gillem

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- On Tuesday, May 9, there was a block party at Gillem Logistics Center in Amazon's parking lot that celebrated National Economic Development Day during Clayton County's Economic Development week. The city's Economic Development Department sponsored food for the event. Around 300 people attended and enjoyed the different vendors and activities. There are different events every day to highlight the industries in Clayton County. Most of the businesses in Forest Park are industrial or transportation related.

3. URA Property List

Mike Williams, delivered the update:

- Mike Williams gave the group a printed copy of all the property the URA owns.
- The old Fire Station at the Gillem Logistics Center is owned by the URA. The matured building will soon be vacated, since the new facility is almost to completion.
- Wherry Housing is owned by the URA. The URA acquired the housing development through a management agreement that expires in October of 2025.
- The Northwest property is owned by the URA. It sits in the northwest corner of the Gillem Logistics Center and is pending transfer from the Army. The transfer is expected to occur July 2023.
- Stevens Lake is owned by the URA. The lake is positioned toward the southern part of Gillem Logistics Center. It is expected to transfer from the Army to the URA shortly after the Northwest property transfers.
- There is a remnant parcel behind Technique Concrete Construction and will be discussed during the executive session.
- There are several remnant properties to the east and south of the Northwest property, between the Kroger facility and building 1100-somewhat going toward the PD firing range, and a detention pond between building 800 and 1200. There has been discussion about the final use of the detention pond and what entity will maintain it. Those are all of the properties that were acquired pursuant to the agreement with the Army.
- Around the same time the URA acquired property from the Army, they also acquired 0 Burke Street. The property was acquired in 2014 and is located in the area where the Raterree Road extension was created. The property is no longer needed for construction of the road. A determination of what/if anything can be done with the property has yet to be made.
- The last set of properties the URA owns are being held for the purpose of the URA bonds. He reiterated that the purpose of the bonds is to renovate Starr Park, the new fire station on Forest Parkway, and the new City Center/City Hall facility. As part of this transaction, these properties were conveyed to the URA and leased back to the city. Technically, the URA owns the City Center/ Public Safety building on Forest Parkway, the current City Hall, Starr Park, and the new Fire Station at Gillem Logistics Center.
- When the bonds are paid off, the URA will deed those properties back over to the city pursuant to the lease back agreement.

- Chairwoman James asked if all the properties have physical addresses and Mike Williams confirmed that not all of them have physical addresses. The northwest property area and Stevens Lake don't have physical addresses. The remnant property behind Technique doesn't have a physical address. The detention pond and other remnant properties at Gillem Logistics don't have addresses. 0 Burke Street was assigned but isn't really an address. All the other properties they own do have addresses. It was asked if the properties don't have addresses, how does that affect the tax records. He responded that once the subdivision plat is approved and submitted to the county, they will assign tax parcel id numbers to the properties. Simultaneously the parcels will be given *dummy addresses*, similar to 0 Burke Street, until permanent addresses are assigned. It was also asked if the properties don't have addresses, how can titles be obtained? The first set of properties at Gillem that were transferred to the URA were given quit-claim deeds from the Army. The Northwest property and Stevens Lake will have additional quit-claim deeds. Essentially those deeds transferred title from the Army to the URA. Title insurance policies are being given as property is transferred to ensure continuity. In terms of the *URA Bond Property*, the city quit claim deeded the properties to the URA, subject to the lease agreements. After the maturity of the bonds (around 15 years) quit-claim deeds will be given from the URA back to the city.
- In 2013-2014, Associated Credit Union had a branch at Ft. Gillem. As part of the bases closure, the credit union wanted to move operations inside the city of Forest Park. In response to that, a parcel of land was acquired in the city, on Main City through a land swap. Associated Credit Union acquired property from the URA on Main Street but was ultimately owned by the DDA. This happened after the Associated Credit Union sold the property to a private property owner. The DDA recently acquired it.

Other Discussion: Mr. Ricky Clark Jr., newly appointed City Manager introduced himself to the board. The chairwomen asked for Mr. Clark to attend the meeting's executive session, so he can be informed and engaged of everything the URA is doing.

4. Water tank painting and maintenance

Bruce Abraham delivered the update:

- As part of the closing deal for Blue Star Studios, the studio's name will be painted on the water tower. As renovations are beginning on the tank, there is a lot of plant growth at the bottom of the tank. Some growth was cut when painting began but more trees need to be removed. Bruce brought 2 estimates for tree removal services. The current URA landscaper gave an estimate of \$2,700 to remove the debris. The other estimate totaled \$5,500 for the same service. He asked for the board's permission to proceed with the lowest estimate to get the trees cut and the area cleaned up. This will be at no cost to Blue Star. The URA will assume payment responsibility based on his observations on the roots growing into the tank that are on URA property. After hearing Mr. Abraham's tree cutting proposal, Mr. Clark asked the Director of Public Works if they can handle the job if its only tree clearing needed. Mr. Jinks agreed that his department could handle it only if tree clearing was involved.
 - Avery Wilson asked if the base on the tank and its structural integrity had been explored. The former board had the tank inspected by engineers. The structure of the tank was found to be structurally sound and certified. The tank will be reinspected every 5 years.

EXECUTIVE SESSION: (Executive Session may be called for issues concerning Personnel, Litigation or Real Estate)

Debra Patrick made a motion to exit the regular meeting and enter executive session at 5:54pm. Eliot Lawrence seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

Eliot Lawrence made a motion to exit executive session and reconvened the regular meeting at 6:17pm. Avery Wilson seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

5. Financial Report

Ed Wall, delivered the update:

- In 2014, the Mayor and City Council created the URA. It was created to borrow money for the infrastructure for Ft. Gillem. In June of 2014, the URA acquired 1,168 acres from the Army for \$30 million dollars. While this transaction was closing, the URA sold about 280 acres to Kroger for \$15 million. The \$15 million was taken from Kroger and immediately paid to the Army. That same day, \$16 million was borrowed for infrastructure improvements (Anvil Block Rd., fiber optics, landscaping, signage, etc.). David Welch, of Robinson Weeks, was hired as the project & construction manager. He went over the budget by \$2-3 million dollars. Some of the land sales had to be coupled with the borrowed \$16 million as a result of this. Water and sewer were left out of the agreement, so the URA had to go to the Clayton County Water Authority to get the water and sewer laid. Clayton County Water did all the work and had the URA pay them the \$2 million back over a period of time. The \$15 million was financed at 0% interest over 7 years. The 7 years were complete in 2021. The first 2 years the Army wasn't owed anything. The 3rd year, the Army was owed \$1 million. The 4th year the Army was owed \$2 million. The owed amount increased by \$1 million per year. The URA had a deal with the Army, that the URA wouldn't pay the \$3.2 million of the last \$5 million payment if the Army hadn't turned over all the land to the URA. The Army still hasn't turned over all the land, so \$3.2 million is still owed. No URA property tax dollars were poured into Gillem. The URA currently has \$4,980,000 in the bank to pay the \$3.2 million owed. The \$16 million bond issue was set up so that Kroger makes a \$1.1 million pilot payment to the Development Authority, then the Development Authority sends it to the city's general fund, and the city makes the annual payment on the \$16 million. The pilot payments were set to escalate 2% a year. As of now, the payment is about \$1.3 million. The \$16 million is being paid back through the Kroger pilot payment. The \$2 million deal to Clayton County Water Authority was paid off completely through land sales. A surcharge was added to every piece of property sold, known as the infrastructure charge at \$2,456 per acre. There is an option on the Northwest property and the infrastructure fee was cut in half. If the group decides to exercise that option, Mr. Wall suggests getting the infrastructure fee back to \$2,456 an acre. Currently, the URA has land to sale and no debt obligations. As of March 27, the URA has \$4,980,000 in the *Future Army Payment Account*. In the Sinking Fund, there is \$303,000 but on March 31 a payment of \$170,000 toward the \$16 million bond was made. Annually on September 1, Kroger pays the URA \$1.1 million, which is now about \$1.3 million. Payments on the \$16 million are due September 30 and March 31. There are other pieces of business done using the URA's name but are handled by the city. The city sold around \$40 million in bonds for the new city center and Starr Park. URA is used as conduit for the bond transactions.
- Charise Clay gave an update on the bank account statements:
 - As of March 31, 2023, the General Checking account had \$4,980,366.09. As of March 31, 2023, the City-Wide Capital Project Fund had \$37,683, 418. 78. As of March 31, 2023, the Sinking Fund account had \$126, 564.22.

6. URA Insurance Renewals

Bruce Abraham delivered the update:

- The Economic Development Department is responsible for updates on the real estate liability policies for all URA owned properties.

7. Department of Community Affairs Registration

Bruce Abraham delivered the update:

- DCA requires the authorities to register with them annually. The Economic Development Department registered all 3 boards (URA, DA, DDA). Changes to the board members and finances are also being updated during this time. All registrations have been accepted by DCA.

8. Stop signs and striping on Anvil Block Extension

Bruce Abraham delivered the update:

- Bruce gave the group a physical map detailing the area being discussed. The Anvil Block Road extension was part of the Kroger expansion. The state of Georgia gave half a million toward the project and the city put in the other half a million dollars. Due to the increased traffic, a striping and signage plan had to be crafted. Mr. Abraham called upon Falcon Design, the city's engineers, to assist with the project. Falcon will gather estimates on the striping of the road and additional signage and present it to the board.
 - Chairwoman James asked if a stop light can be placed there instead of a stop sign. Mr. Abraham advised that a traffic light costs around \$250,000 and a warrant from the Department of Transportation would have to verify the need. The proposed stop signs will assist with the flow and speed of traffic.

9. Guard shack removal and Amazon intersection redesign

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- The guard shack at Gillem currently stands between 5 different entrances at the logistics center. The belief is that the building is protected under SHIPO, which makes it historic. Our engineers are working with SHIPO to get the building disqualified as historic, so it can be removed. Engineering plans for redesigning the intersection are in the making. A roundabout was also considered as an alternative but too many large trucks travel through the area. Once SHIPO comes to a decision, an estimate for the guard shack demolition will be prepared and presented to the board coupled with a plan for how to restructure the intersection.

10. Road repair Anvil Block and Metcalf

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- It was asked if the city/URA engineers to provide an estimate to repair roads that the URA owns at Gillem. Said estimate totaled \$1 million. As an alternative to the costly full repair, an estimate of \$250,000 is being prepared to repair the areas that have large holes and deficiencies. Once the final estimate is prepared, Mr. Abraham will present it before the board.
 - Chairwoman James circled back to a previous discussion on the availability of TAD funds and if the POA would pay for the road repair. Mr. Abraham informed her that to the best of understanding that \$150,000 of TAD funds were available. He also suggested that the city perhaps contribute towards the repair. The POA has taken the stance of not wanting to contribute to the road repair, they contribute through their taxes, and expect quality roads in return. She asked Mr. Abraham to provide the members of the POA. He responded, there are 5 companies that make up the POA: himself-as a representative of the URA, Robinson Weeks, Blue Star Studios, Kroger, and TA Realty. TA Realty owns a considerable number of properties at Gillem. David Welch of Robinson Weeks built many of their buildings and now they are owner operators of those facilities.

11. Anvil Block- Lake City extension repairs

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- Lake City would like to partner with the URA to get that portion of the road repaired. Frequent truck traffic has dilapidated the sidewalks. Lake City placed metal blocks on portions of as a deterrent for trucks. They expressed their willingness to turn over the road.

12. Old Fire Station Evaluation

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- Mr. Abraham met with the individuals that are conducting the evaluation and appraisal on the fire station. Based on preliminary observations, there may be plumbing, fire safety, and grease trap issues during renovations. The group provided Mr. Abraham with the following options based on their analysis of the station: sale the building outright to a restaurant, lease the building to a restaurant with the restaurant making all the renovations, or

have the URA make all the improvements and find a restaurant to go in the building. A retail group previously conducted a study on lunch traffic at Gillem and determined most people at the logistics center either buy lunch from their employers' cafeteria or bring their lunch. With the opening of Blue Star Studios, there will be a future need for close retail.

13. Intersection Metcalf & Jonesboro redesign

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- A \$8,000 traffic study was requested for the intersection. All parties involved are concerned about improving the exit for safety reasons. Kimley Horn have proposed solutions to the congested area. Once the city engineers review the proposal, a final proposal will be presented.

14. Army property turnover

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- After speaking with Oasis and the city attorney, the northern property will be turned over in July and the southern property will be turned over in September. These dates are subject to change, as they've changed previously.

15. New Fire Station Opening 5/12/2023

Bruce Abraham, delivered the update:

- The new fire station is opening on May 12, 2023, at 9:30am at Gillem Logistics Center off of Anvil Block Road. It's the newest built facility in Forest Park in nearly 20 years. Everyone is invited to the celebration.

16. Escrow Fee

Mike Williams delivered the update:

- During major construction projects, the contract documents will allow you to retain a percentage of the payments until the project is completed. In regard to the new fire station, it was requested that the retainage be deposited into an escrow account. Storing it this way benefits the contractor. The account was opened at Truist. The way the account is operated is that there is an escrow initiation fee of \$2,500 and an annual escrow fund payment as long as the account roughly has \$1,500 in it. A master escrow agreement was negotiated with Truist. The \$2,500 fee will only be paid once just to set up the master agreement, compared to paying it when every new escrow account is opened. For each sub-escrow account, there will be a \$1,500 annual fee to initiate the account.
- The general assembly has since changed the law regarding retainage. Himself as well as some of the contractors have concluded that they no longer need to contribute to the escrow account. The one escrow account and agreement will be closed out because the station is complete. The transaction came through the URA because they own the fire station.
 - Chairwoman James asked who would be responsible for making sure the escrow account gets closed. Mike Williams reported that between Mr. James Shelby, who has been acting as the project manager, and Ms. Chiquita Barkley, Finance Director, they will ensure the account gets closed.

ADJOURNMENT:

Avery Wilson made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:51pm. Debra Patrick seconded the motion. Motion approved unanimously.

*In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act,
those requiring accommodation for meetings should notify
the City Clerk's Office at least 24 hours prior to the meeting at 404-366-1555.*