

CITY OF PORTAGE BROWNFIELD REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Wednesday May 4, 2022

8:30AM Portage

City Hall Conference Room 1

The City of Portage Brownfield Redevelopment Authority meeting of May 4, 2022 was called to order by Chair Barker at 8:35am.

In Attendance

Elliott Berlin, City Brownfield Attorney]

Andrew Falkenberg, Deputy Assessor

Kelly Peterson, Director of Community Development

Introductions

Introductions of Authority members, staff, applicants, and members of the public in attendance at the meeting were conducted.

Roll Call

Ms. Peterson called the roll: Chair Barker (yes); Vice Chair Alburtus (excused); Secretary/Treasurer Lenehan (excused); Mr. Lewandowski (yes); Mr. Herberg (yes); Mr. Galin (yes); Mr. Monroe (yes); Mr. Vomastek (yes); Mr. Campbell (yes).

Approval of Minutes

Motion by Mr. Herberger to approve the BRA Meeting Minutes of June 18, 2020. The motion was seconded by Mr. Monroe. Motion carried 7-0.

New Business

A voting quorum at the meeting was confirmed by Chair Barker, who introduced the first item and turned over the floor to City Attorney Berlin for an overview of the applications.

Attorney Berlin presented an overview of the Kotobuki Seating, Inc. Brownfield Plan proposed for 5200 S. Sprinkle Road, confirming legal compliance and reviewing key figures of the proposed plan, reminding the Authority of the City's Brownfield Redevelopment Incentive Policy including evaluation criteria and recommendation process. Applicant, Mr. Hal Thomas (President of Kotobuki Seating International/CEO of Interkal Spectator Seating) answered Authority member questions about the property, ownership structure, project phasing and an overview of the business history and current activities of Kotobuki Seating, Inc. Additional questions were asked of the applicant regarding the size of building, timing of the project, and exterior site design, who provided responses and clarifications to the Authority.

Following this series of questions and answers between the Authority members and applicant, Chair Barker called for a vote. Mr. Galin made a motion to approve the application as presented. Chair Barker seconded the motion. The Authority voted 7-0 to recommend the the brownfield application for Kotobuki Seating, Inc. to the City Council.

Attorney Berlin then presented an overview of the IPUSA Partners Brownfield Plan for 801 E. Milham, confirming legal compliance and reviewing key figures of the proposed plan, reminding the Authority of the City's Brownfield Redevelopment Incentive Policy including evaluation criteria and recommendation process. The applicant's representative, Mr. Joe Agostinelli (Agostinelli Advisors) provided the Authority with additional information about the project, the ownership structure of IPUSA, describing it as a joint venture between Clark Logic and Great Lakes Capital who manage speculative building space in southwest Michigan and northwest Indiana, and detailing the statewide need for large warehouse space that is currently unmet.

Mr. Agostinelli confirmed that the project is speculative in nature, and that discussions are ongoing with potential tenants but that as of the meeting date, no letters of intent or leases had been signed. Authority members broached questions to Mr. Agostinelli about site access, traffic concerns, and neighborhood buffer issues. Staff confirmed that site plan access issues will be addressed through the site plan review process still underway, and that a traffic impact study would be required to address site access issues. It was also confirmed that the financing for the project is entirely private equity. Additional queries by the Authority members were made to the applicant representative about site history and contamination.

Chair Barker reviewed the evaluation criteria with the Authority, noting it was difficult to gauge the impact to jobs for the City, based on the application; presented questions about interest as an eligible activity, which Attorney Berlin confirmed was consistent with the City policy, depreciation, and tax captures. Discussion was held among Authority members. Mr. Vomstack inquired if the next step was for the application to be presented to the City Council and noted that the financial impact was much greater on the City than the schools as presented in the application. Additional questions and discussion were offered by the Authority members regarding site access, circulation, proximity to the railroad tracks, and buildable floor area.

Mr. Lewandowski inquired about the timing of the project. Mr. Agostinelli advised that the applicant hopes to break ground 30 days after all City approvals and permits are issued, and that the urgency of the project is related by a desire to have the project in place by Spring 2023. Chair Barker inquired how the project was intended to help correct areas with environmental damage if the intent is to build on top of the contamination. Mr. Campbell, speaking from his professional expertise as a geologist, was able to advise that the low concentration of heavy metals (such as zinc) found on site wouldn't migrate a significant distance (versus PFAS by comparison) or create exposure issues to drinking water. Additionally, he noted there are no wells on the site, the site accesses city water.

Mr. Vomastek moved to approve the application as presented. Mr. Monroe seconded the motion. The Authority voted 7-0 to recommend the application to the City Council.

Old Business

None

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Authority, Chair Barker requested a motion to adjourn the meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Lewandowski and was seconded by Mr. Vomastek. The Authority voted 7-0 to adjourn the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

K. Peterson
Director of Community Development

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