

**REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY OF FRANKLIN TOWNSHIP
SOMERSET COUNTY, NEW JERSEY**

**MINUTES OF MEETING
January 24, 2005**

The meeting of the Redevelopment Agency of Franklin Township was held at 475 DeMott Lane, Somerset, NJ and was called to order at 7:30 p.m. by Chairman Richard Barber. The Sunshine Law was read. The roll was taken as follows:

PRESENT: Mayor Brian Levine, Dennis Sanders, Kimberly Francois, Councilwoman Wandra Ashley-Williams, Michael Gianotto and Chairman Richard Barber

ABSENT: None

ALSO PRESENT: Kenneth W. Daly, Executive Director, Anne Babineau, Esq. and Diane Milgram, Recording Secretary

ADMINISTRATION OF OATH OF OFFICE

The listed individuals took the Oath of Office:

Richard Barber
Dennis Sanders
Councilwomen Wandra Ashley-Williams
Mayor Brian Levine

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Richard Barber stepped down as Chair of the meeting. Mr. Daly asked for nominations. A motion was made to nominate Richard Barber as Chairman by acclamation. All were in favor. Mr. Barber resumed the Chair. A motion was made to nominate Kimberly Francois as Vice Chairperson. All members were in favor.

MINUTES

- **Regular Meeting of December 20, 2004**

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes as submitted. All members were in favor.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

- **Business Planning Committee Report**

Ms. Francois gave an overview of the meeting held on January 12, 2005. She noted three major topics of discussion. The three topics were: property maintenance/code enforcement/removal of existing blight, township incentives/assistance and a redeveloper business model. Ms. Francois suggested that the Business Plan Committee establish a monthly public meeting. There were no questions from the Agency regarding Ms. Francois' summary and the written report from the Committee.

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- **Redeveloper Committee Report**

Ms. Babineau addressed the Agency. She stated that there was a Redeveloper's Sub-Committee meeting to discuss the status of the Gateway Project. Ms. Babineau stated that the Redeveloper's Agreement was not signed by the Redeveloper.

There was a discussion why the Redeveloper did not sign the Agreement.

Mr. Gianotto asked what procedures are necessary to solicit another redeveloper. Ms. Babineau stated that there is no formal solicitation required and that it is at the Agency's discretion.

Mr. Gianotto asked about the anchor store's contract and Ms. Babineau stated that there are 2 or 3 milestones needed in that lease. There were further discussions regarding the Agreement, finances and looking for new redevelopers. Ms. Babineau stated that it is not unusual for a Redeveloper to need government assistance. She stated that the Agency would have to decide by itself whether to seek another redeveloper or to stay with current Redeveloper.

There were discussions regarding a timeframe for the Redeveloper to sign the Agreement and solicitation for another redeveloper(s). By consensus of the members, the Executive Director was instructed to send a letter to the Gateway Partnership stating that the Redeveloper has ten (10) days to submit a signed Agreement for the Agency's consideration. The Executive Director was also instructed to research alternate courses of action, including solicitation of other developers.

NEW BUSINESS

- **Joint Meeting with Planning Board Regarding Master Plan**

Mr. Daly reported that the Planning Board had requested a joint discussion regarding the Master Plan. A tentative date was set for March 21, 2005.

PUBLIC DISCUSSION

A motion was made to open the public portion. All members were in favor.

Ms. J. Barry, 31 Camner Avenue, stated she is not happy with the Agency's actions and the Redeveloper's lack of money.

Mr. Court Throckmorton, 591 Somerset Street, voiced his concerns regarding the timeline that was part of the Agreement. He stated that if the Redeveloper was interested he would have signed the contract; therefore the Agency should drop the Redeveloper. He asked about the legal fees charged to the Township regarding John Paff's recent lawsuit.

Mr. R. Prieto, 837 Somerset Street, asked the Agency, in the future, to consider the individuals within the community to redevelop their own property.

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Mr. John McConville, 5 Stone Leigh Way, asked for clarification regarding using public dollars and whether the Redeveloper could post a bond for future expenses. Councilwoman Wandra Ashley-Williams stated that Council has not received any proposals for their actions.

Ms. F. Certo-Bauer, 73 Berry Street, stated her concerns regarding the extensions given to the Redeveloper and the lack of funds.

Mr. Tom Vislocky, 60 McGuffey Avenue, asked about the Senior Housing Study. He stated that the Agency should solicit redevelopers now for all the properties that are to be redeveloped.

Ms. Gail King, 38 Booker Street, stated that in fifteen years, the Township has not invested any monies in her area. She asked that the Agency get the people involved with the redevelopment.

Ms. Barry, speaking on behalf of her mother, voiced her concerns regarding the 2 minute time limit.

A motion was made to close the public portion. All members were in favor.

Ms. Babineau addressed the lawsuit question, stating that the request for the closed session minutes were submitted to the Agency and was being responded to before the litigation was filed. The litigation was not about the failure to provide the executive session minutes, but about how much these minutes are redacted..

In regard to requiring bonds from the Redeveloper, Ms Babineau stated financial contingencies are part of the agreement for the full value of the project prior to commencement, like closing of property by acquisition.

As for the Senior Housing Study, Ms. Babineau has no information but Mr. Daly could look into that. As for soliciting redevelopers for the complete project, she stated that there is nothing stopping the Agency from doing that.

There was no Executive Session.

A motion to adjourn the meeting was made at 9:00 p.m. All members were in favor.