

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough
Redevelopment Authority
April 23, 2019**

The State College Borough Redevelopment Authority (RDA) met on Wednesday, April 23, 2019, in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street. Sally Lenker, Chair, called the meeting to order at Noon.

Members Present

Sally Lenker, Chair; Rebecca Misangyi; Colleen Ritter, Vice-Chair; and James Shincovich

Members Absent

Mark Huncik

Others Present

Ed LeClear, Planner Director; Jenna Wargo, Planner; Sandra Lieb, Administrative Assistant; and other interested parties.

Approval of Minutes

A motion to approve the March 27, 2019 minutes as submitted was made by Mr. Shincovich and seconded by Ms. Misangyi. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Ms. Lenker, Chair, had nothing to report.

Public Hour - Hearing of Citizens

No one was in the audience who wished to discuss items not on the agenda.

Financial Matters

March 2019 Expense Voucher Approvals

Ms. Ritter moved to approve the March 2019 Expense Vouchers. Mr. Shincovich seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Community Development

Update on NSP Student License Purchase Program

Mr. LeClear reported the Borough Solicitor had not had a chance to work on this program. He added either in the summer or fall there would be a conversation with Borough Council.

Ms. Lenker asked if the purchasing of homes was off the table. Mr. LeClear stated yes. He noted staff was hoping to get all the inventory sold.

Economic Development

Local Economic Revitalization Tax Assistance (LERTA) Proposal

Mr. LeClear explained LERTA was a tax assistance program. Mr. LeClear stated there would not be a reduction in taxes paid. He added they would continue to pay the amount with a gradual increase for improvements on the building. He reported this tool had been used around the commonwealth for decades. This was used for redevelopment projects when buildings could not be torn down. He said this was only for commercial properties.

Mr. LeClear said this proposal would be very descriptive, so it was clear it was for rehabilitation of a historic structure located in the 1982 Historic Resources of the Centre Region, within a certain geographic boundary.

Mr. Shincovich asked what would happen if they wanted to go back to residential. Mr. LeClear said they would lose the abatement.

Mr. LeClear stated the two buildings that were being demolished would not qualify for this program. He said several churches were also included in the LERTA district, but he did think it was likely the owners would use the program. He added that LERTA would help to incentivize rehabilitation of the existing building if the owners did convert to a commercial use.

Mr. LeClear said at the time of application, the tax assessment would be locked, and they would pay the abated property tax for a period of 10 years. He added there would only be a window for five years from the effective date of the ordinance.

Mr. Shincovich stated he saw the benefits of LERTA and asked what the downside was. Mr. LeClear noted if someone would do this without LERTA there would be less improvements made. Mr. Shincovich asked if staff would see the value of it, and Mr. LeClear said the tax assessment would show what the value of the building would be.

Mr. LeClear noted they worked hard on this to keep the Glennland building from being torn down. He added if this process did not work, it would be demolished.

Mr. LeClear said he hoped this would help Fairmount but was concerned about some of the churches.

Ms. Misangyi asked if it would make sense to consider a different number of buildings per year. Mr. LeClear said it could be no more than three properties per year. He added there was already a physical cap because if the footprint of the building was not large enough you would not get very much.

Update on State College Town Centre Project

Mr. LeClear stated the Ron Lucas, Esquire, was the attorney for the Highland Holding Group, and Terry Williams, Esquire, was the attorney for the Borough. He stated they hoped to have everything in front of Council sometime in June.

Official Reports and Correspondence

Borough Council

Mr. LeClear reported Borough Council would be deciding on LERTA and the south track lighting.

Planning Commission

Mr. LeClear stated PC was in the process of negotiating terms with the new hires.

Upcoming Meeting

The next scheduled meeting would be Wednesday, May 22, 2019 at Noon.

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 12:58 p.m. by Ms. Lenker, Chair. At that time, the Authority reconvened to an Executive Session to discuss real estate matters.

Respectfully submitted,

Sandra M. Lieb
Administrative Assistant