

**Charleston Land Reuse Agency
January 10, 2023 2:00 pm
Meeting Minutes**

Board Members

Chris Campbell, Chair	Citizen Member
Marylin McKeown, Vice Chair	Citizen Member
Andy Wood, Acting Treasurer	Acting City Manager
Vacant, Secretary	Council Member
Emmett Pepper	Council Member
Mathew Sutton	Mayor's Representative
Vacant	Citizen Member

Ex-Officio Members

Tony Harmon	Building Commissioner
Kevin Baker	City Attorney
Dan Vriendt	Planning Director
Andy Backus	MOECD Director

Staff Present

John Butterworth

Others Present

Andy Blackwood, Executive Director of Habitat
for Humanity for Kanawha and Putnam

- 1. Welcome and silent roll call**
- 2. Adoption of Minutes from December 13, 2022 meeting**

Motion was made and adopted by unanimous voice vote to approve the minutes of the December 13, 2022 CLRA meeting.

- 3. Public Comment**

No public comment.

- 4. Reports of Treasurer, Vice Chair, Chair**

Andy Wood presented the Treasurer's Report

No Vice Chair Report.

No Chair Report.

CHARLESTON LAND REUSE AGENCY MEETING
JANUARY 10, 2023

5. Report of Redevelopment Division

John Butterworth discussed recent conversations with the Kanawha Housing Authority in regard to the LRA's attempt to purchase property in the general vicinity and to also work with the Housing Authority in their purchase of the old theater and bowling alley building directly adjacent to their administrative offices, located at 1511 Washington Street, West. John said he was not sure what their most recent intentions are for this purchase. However, over ten years ago when Mark Taylor purchased the lien, the intentions were to turn it into a youth center. The Housing Authority only recently received title to the property. The Housing Authority was also able to acquire a vacant parking lot in the back.. The city purchased the lien on the other piece, which had been subdivided for bankruptcy. The city made a bid for 711 Bream Street. The structure at 711 Bream Street is in deplorable shape. Tony Harmon said the structure was not in immediate need of demolition at this time. The city was outbid for this property. The highest bidder failed to follow through, so 711 Bream Street will be up for bid again.

This situation brings up the issue of revisiting properties where the LRA was not the highest bidder of certain properties, only for the properties to be available for bid when the highest bidder fails to follow through with completing the purchase. John will discuss later in the meeting when going over the work plan. John asked the Board for their position on upholding prior authorizations for bidding properties under the above-mentioned circumstances.

John stated that the LRA has other holdings in the West Washington Street corridor, as does CURA. By working with Housing Authority there is an opportunity for coordinating plans for that area.

Chris Campbell said that the board will uphold its authorization to place a minimum \$50 bid on the property at 711 Bream Street.

John said he would review the properties where the LRA was not the successful bidder and follow up on whether or not these properties will be available for bid in the near future.

6. Report of Conservation Division

IMBA Trail Accelerator Grant Program – John Butterworth and Ben Adams received an email from Jack Hoblitzell on behalf of the Kanawha Valley Trail Alliance. Mr. Hoblitzell was wanting to let the LRA know that other communities in the state have been successful in applying for and being an award funds from the Trail Accelerator Grant Program through the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA). This could be a good fit for other plans the LRA has for the city, i.e. Cato Park and Amity Drive property.

It is a one to one matching grant, meaning the LRA would be required to match dollar for dollar, up to \$30,000 for designing and planning. This grant is specifically for communities that are under-served or have health challenges, both criteria that apply to Charleston, WV, namely, the west side.

The timeline is early Summer 2023. There is no exact date when it will officially open. Marylin asked if there was any data that identifies the priorities for recreational asset development on the West Side? John responded that, specific to cycling, there is the Bike Master Plan. The plan mostly references bicycle amenities on existing streets. It does not reference trails.

The trails can be multimodal, for hiking and biking, but they definitely want it to serve bikers.

Chris Campbell recommended that, since the application deadline is early Summer 2023, that it be included in the work session and continue working through the agenda items.

Emmett Pepper informed the board that he has done research on the different measurements / matrixes of the performance of municipalities where open space is concerned and one of the matrix involved having a parks within a 10-minute walk of everywhere in the city or 90% of the population.

7. Report on the Vacant Structures Ordinance

Tony Harmon reported that, with the help of Planning, doing inventory of the vacant structure list. There are several properties that have been removed from the vacant structure list through demolition and other means.

Dan Vriendt noted that through doing data analysis, there were also duplicate permits and some that had been demolished and not updated. The current list contains approximately 457 vacant properties. The original number was in the 600's.

Discussion took place regarding the need of a system for the vacant structure process, one that can house and track the information, as well as invoice.

- 8.** Discussion took place concerning the work plan. Review of the work plan is to take place on a quarterly basis.

Unfinished Business

9. Items of Limited Update

Regarding the 'Tax Sale through the WWSAO', John Butterworth provided an update.

Regarding the 'Donation Request, 1907 4th Avenue', Kevin Baker provided an update.

Regarding the 'Donation Request, Sugar Creek School', authorization has been given verbally to proceed with the demolition. Still waiting for written authorization.

Regarding the 'Bulk Donation', involving transfer of property from the City to the CLRA, Kevin Baker stated that those properties are city properties. The City needs to decide whether or not they want those properties.

Regarding '739 Central Avenue' – John Butterworth reported that, where the timeline is concerned, the end of February is most likely.

Regarding '602 Thompson & 1548 Lewis Streets' – Kevin Baker confirmed that the quiet title action is pending.

Regarding 'Sheriff's Tax Sale – Abutting Landowners – 802 Park Avenue' – John Butterworth has spoken with the landowners. He needs to follow up with the landowners to make sure they reimburse the LRA for the costs incurred for this property through the tax sale process.

Regarding 'Hope Cemetery' – Kevin Baker reported that he is still trying to contact one final neighbor.

8. Community Input and Coordination

'Abandoned Properties Coalition' – John Butterworth said his involvement with this statewide network has been beneficial on several levels pertaining to historic preservation, land reuse and community development .

9. Direct Public Input

The Wertz Avenue process is closed

Fall Roundtable

Fall Public Input Session

Schedule Spring Public Input Session

10. Administrative and Strategic Initiatives

Chris Campbell recommended discussing these items during their strategic session.

John Butterworth added that a lot of conversation has taken place concerning the disposition of property.

Chris Campbell further added that staff composition is a more immediate item. The board is now short two board members, one a city council member and the other a city resident member. Chris asked that if anyone on the board knew anyone who would be interested to please let him know. They mayor has asked for a list of names.

11. CLRA Long Range and Strategic Work Session

Discussion concerning upcoming Long Range and Strategic work session and the policies and initiatives. Chris wants to focus more on initiatives and less on policies. However, there are some policies the board is going to have to reach an agreement on, especially EOI process.

12. New Business

Habitat for Humanity for Kanawha and Putnam – John introduced Andy Blackwood, Executive Director of Habitat for Humanity for Kanawha and Putnam. John and Andy met last week to discuss his organization's interest in properties on the inventory. After their discussion, it seemed that having Andy attend today's meeting and share his interest with the board should be the next step.

Andy addressed the Board. John thought it would be beneficial to key in on the properties of interest:

- 918 1st Avenue (involves a quiet title action)
- 1514 2nd Avenue (donated property)
- 831 Stockton Street
- 2108 6th Avenue

Discussion concerning the goals for the LRA mentioned in the Mayor's State of the City of Address.

Adjournment

The motion was made and approved by voice vote to adjourn the meeting. The next CLRA meeting is Tuesday, February 14, 2023.