



## Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation (NORLIC)

### Meeting Minutes – August 25, 2023

A meeting of the Niagara Orleans Regional Land Improvement Corporation was held at 9 a.m. on August 25, 2023 at the Samuel M. Ferraro Center For Economic Development, 6311 Inducon Corporate Dr., Sanborn New York

- 1-2. Welcome Remarks/Roll: The meeting was called to order at 9:07 a.m. by Chairman Updegrove.

#### **Board of Director Attendance:**

Richard Updegrove – Chairman  
Christopher Voccio – Vice Chairman  
Michael Casale – Board Member  
Rob DePaolo – Board Member  
Kevin Forma – Board Member  
Lynn Johnson – Board Member (Via Webex)  
Heather Peck – Board Member

#### **Officer Attendance:**

Andrea Klyczek – Executive Director  
Amy Schifferli – Treasurer

#### **Staff Attendance:**

Katherine Alexander – Attorney  
Matthew Chavez - Project Manager  
Jacquiline Minicucci – Recording Secretary  
Jack Welch – Orleans County Absent

3. Approval of Minutes:  
A motion to approve minutes from the June 23, 2023 NORLIC meeting as submitted by Jacquiline Minicucci was made by Mr. Casale, seconded by Mr. DePaolo. Ayes 7, Noes 0. Carried.
4. Financial Report: Mrs. Minicucci reviewed expenses and provided the board with current financial statements. No concerns noted.

#### **Action Items:**

5. 5222 Junction Road: Ms. Klyczek stated the 16.5 acre industrial zoned property has been tax delinquent for 15 years. The proposed action would allow NORLIC to accept the tax lien from Niagara County and transfer the property for future development. A private developer has shown interest in the property and is working closely with NORLIC's attorney to enter into an agreement which would include a development enforcement mortgage. The proposed development would be completed in phases and would include electrical upgrades, remediation and job creation. The parcel is eligible for New York State

Brownfield tax credits and has applied for a loan from the Niagara County Brownfields Development Corporation. Ms. Alexander stated that the resolution language should be amended to include the acceptance of the tax lien at 5222 Junction Road and enter into a contract with (Developer Name) including a development enforcement mortgage. A motion to accept the tax lien and transfer the property for development was made by Mr. Updegrove and seconded by Mr. Forma. Ayes 7, Noes 0. Carried.

6. CDGB Funding: Mr. Chavez informed the board that the grant funding agreement is in draft format and he is working closely with the City of Niagara Falls to finalize the details. The grant would include the stabilization of three properties on Niagara Avenue. 1129 Niagara Avenue is owned by the municipality and the two adjacent properties are privately owned. Mr. Chavez has been in contact with the owners to discuss the possibility of acquisition. The project location is in coordination with the Niagara University housing development planned target area. Mr. Forma stated he will look into the building code violations and forward the information to Mr. Chavez. A motion to accept the grant funding was made by Mr. Updegrove and seconded by Mr. Voccio. 7 Ayes, 0 Noes. Carried.
7. Property Acceptance:
  - a.) 6 Ashley Place, Lockport – Ms. Peck informed the board that the vacant building is considered to be a health and safety hazard and is a candidate for demolition. The property is on the City of Lockport tax foreclosure list. Mr. Chavez stated that HCR Phase II grant funding can be utilized for the demolition expenses. A motion to accept 6 Ashley Place for the purpose of demolition was made by Ms. Peck and seconded by Mr. DePaolo. 7 Ayes, 0 Noes. Carried.
  - b-e.) 435 – 13<sup>th</sup> Street, 1805 Weston Ave, 1535 Pierce Ave, 2401 Whitney Ave: Mr. Chavez presented the board with inspection reports and gave a brief review of the condition of each property. Upon acceptance of the properties, HCR Phase II grant funding will be utilized for stabilization. Repairs will be site specific and may include roofs, doors, windows, etc. at an estimated expense of \$70,000 per property. Mr. Forma stated that 1805 Weston Ave, 1535 Pierce Ave., and 2401 Whitney Ave. are in a target area that is being studied by a consortium of agencies including HUD and Niagara University for revitalization. A motion to accept all four properties for stabilization was made by Mr. Voccio and seconded by Mr. Forma. 7 Ayes, 0 Noes. Carried.
8. Environmental Review Firm RFQ – Ms. Schifferli informed the board that she prepared an RFQ per our professional services procurement policy guidelines to obtain a firm that can assist with some of the HCR grant environmental review requirements. The RFQ was posted to the NYS Contract Reporter, directly emailed to multiple firms in WNY and five responses were received. The proposals were reviewed by Ms. Schifferli and Mr. Chavez and all five firms have similar experience and qualifications. One firm is a MBE. Chairman Updegrove recommended selecting multiple firms to give the landbank flexibility on a project by project basis. A motion to accept all five firms as qualified

to perform environmental services was made by Mr. Updegrove and seconded by Mr. Casale. 7 Ayes, 0 Noes. Carried.

**Project Manager Update:**

9. - HCR Phase II Funding - Mr. Chavez informed the board that non-capital expenses have been approved by HCR for the five proposed properties in Niagara Falls. Environmental review's need to be completed and approved prior to incurring any capital expenses. Mr. Chavez provided an overview of the \$1.4 million HCR Grant funding budget allocations for the 18-month period.
  - Local Initiative Support Corp (LISC) – Mr. Chavez stated that the study is being completed in coordination with Niagara University and it will help produce information to assist in identifying the best areas to utilize grant funding for revitalization. Mr. Forma noted that the City of Niagara Falls has expressed the need for site specific information versus a general overview of neighborhoods.
  - Pro Housing Grant – Mr. Chavez stated that the LISC working group discussed the grant requirements and noted it is not feasible for the City of Niagara Falls and they will not be pursuing the funding at this time. Mr. Chavez noted he would contact Ms. Johnson to discuss the possibility of an application by Orleans County.

**General Business:**

10. Ms. Klyczek stated that there is a lack of available property in Niagara County that can be utilized for commercial development. Ms. Klyczek provided the board with a map indicating parcels adjacent to Niagara Community College that have been identified for possible acquisition. Preliminary conversations were held with the current property owners to explore the possibility of a sale. Owner of the 105 acre parcel expressed an interest in selling the property. A property assessment is recommended to confirm the proposed property value. Ms. Klyczek is requesting that the board allow the landbank to further the discussion and enter into an agreement for acquisition contingent upon an environmental review, property assessment, and a zoning amendment. The board discussed the mission of the landbank and Chairman Updegrove stated that the current direction of the landbank is not indicative of its original purpose which was to identify all in-rem properties for possible development or disposal which is in the best interest of the taxpayers. Chairman Updegrove noted the lack of shovel-ready parcels available for business development in the area and indicated that the possibility of utilizing the landbank to acquire land for this purpose is well within the mission. Ms. Johnson requested additional information regarding the purpose of the acquisition. Ms. Klyczek stated that as part of the site development process, privately owned vacant parcels have been identified for possible acquisition. The targeted property, if feasible, would be developed into a business park. Mr. Casale informed the board that he is active in the WNY Industrial Real Estate Task Group that has identified a need and is currently pursuing new sites for possible business relocation and development in all eight WNY counties. Ms. Johnson expressed concern stating that she felt the landbank mission was more residential focused, not commercial. Chairman Updegrove stated that Niagara County allocated \$1 million of ARPA funding to the landbank for the purpose of land

improvement and address needs within its communities. A motion to authorize an assessment, environmental review, and zoning amendment utilizing Niagara County ARPA funding was made by Mr. DePaolo and seconded by Mr. Casale. 6 Ayes, 1 No (Johnson).

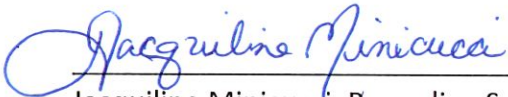
**Attorney Update:** No Items to Report

**Other Business:** No Items to Report.

**Adjournment:**

A motion to adjourn the meeting at 10:20 a.m. was made by Mr. Updegrove, seconded by Mr. Casale. Ayes 7, Noes 0. Carried.

Respectfully Submitted,



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Jacquiline Minicucci, Recording Secretary