

Allegheny County Council

*County of Allegheny
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Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday, March 27, 2008

4:00 PM

Conference Room 1

Committee on Economic Development & Housing

Rich Fitzgerald, Chair; Jim Burn, Joan Cleary, John DeFazio, Matt Drozd, Mike Finnerty, Nick Futules, Amanda Green, Bob Macey, and Jan Rea - Members

I. Call to Order

Summary: *The meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM*

Invited Guests:

Jim Flynn, County Manager or Designee

Dennis Davin, Director, Economic Development or Designee

Mike Wojcik, County Solicitor or Designee

Summary: *Invited guests in attendance: Mr. Flynn, Mr. Wojcik, and Mr. Davin*

Recognized attendees: Jack Excler, Bob Hurley, Angie Hicks, and Richard Rrynii - Economic Development; Pete Beaman - Law firm of Buchanan Ingersoll & Rooney; and Amy Farber, Carnegie Mellon University

Council staff in attendance: John Mascio and Jared Barker

II. Roll Call

Roll Call: Present: Matt Drozd, Michael Finnerty, Nick Futules, Bob Macey, and Chair Rich Fitzgerald
Absent: Jim Burn, John DeFazio, Amanda Green, and Jan Rea
Phone: Joan Cleary

III. Approval of Minutes

3862-08 Motion to approve the minutes of the February 26, 2008 Economic Development & Housing Committee Meeting.

Summary: *Ms. Hicks and Ms. Faber provided the committee with a summary of the bill. They explained that the it would be desirable for the health, safety and welfare of the region's residents to refinance bonds for Carnegie Mellon University through the Higher Education Building authority.*

They said that the Allegheny County Higher Education Building Authority intends to issue Bonds, in an amount not to exceed \$135,000,000, plus required reserves and costs of issuance. This transaction is for a refunding project consisting of the current refunding of all or portions of the Allegheny County Higher Education Building Authority University Revenue Bonds.

Additionally, the proceeds will fund any necessary reserves and pay all or a portion of the costs of issuance, including the costs of obtaining credit enhancement for the Bonds.

They said that the Bonds are limited obligations, of the Authority, payable solely from the project or from revenue from the University.

Action: **A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Futules, that this matter be Passed. The motion carried unanimously.**

IV. Agenda Items

Ordinances

3712-08

An Ordinance of the County of Allegheny, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, granting authority to the County of Allegheny (the "County") to assign its interest in certain real estate tax liens to Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County ("RAAC") which the County acquired in the settlement of an action brought by GLS Capital, Inc.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary:

Mr. Davin provided the committee with a summary of the bill. He explained that in 2007, the County of Allegheny acquired certain real property tax liens in the settlement of action in federal court brought by GLS Capital, Inc. and Dynex Capital, Inc.

He said that the Redevelopment Authority of Allegheny County (RAAC) provided the settlement funds in the sum of \$1.625 million to the County in order to acquire these liens. RAAC believes the assignment and transfer of these tax liens will be beneficial to their development efforts. He said that the County will take the liens, exonerate them, and use the property for development. He said that there were approximately 19,000 parcels affected.

Action:

A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Finnerty, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

3842-08

An Ordinance Authorizing the County of Allegheny to acquire the Riverton Railroad Bridge and approaches over the Monongahela River, between City of Duquesne and City of McKeesport, from the Union Railroad Company, for the Steel Valley Trail.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Summary:

Mr. Davin and Mr. Hurley provided the committee with a visual and oral presentation of the project. They explained that the bill would authorize the County to acquire the Riverton Railroad Bridge and approaches over the Monongahela River, between the City of Duquesne and the City of McKeesport, from the Union Railroad Company to be used to complete the Steel Valley Trail. The said that this is subject to the Union Railroad receiving approval of its application for abandonment from the Surface Transportation Board. The Union Railroad intends to donate the bridge, so there would be no cost to the County.

The ordinance would also allow for the conveyance of any portion of the McKeesport approach of the Riverton Bridge that would not be required to develop the Steel Valley Trail to the Regional Industrial Development Corporation Southwestern Pennsylvania Growth Fund, or its designee, for consideration of One Dollar (\$1.00).

The bridge will form a link in the 9-mile gap in the Great Allegheny Passage, a trail system intended to run from Washington DC to downtown Pittsburgh. The trail is complete and operating from downtown to Baldwin Borough near the Glenwood Bridge and from the City of McKeesport to Cumberland, Maryland. There, it connects with the 183-mile C&O Canal Towpath trail to Washington, DC.

Mr. Drozd said that prior to final action on this bill, he would like confirmation and assurance that the bridge is safe. Mr. Davin said that he would provide that to him.

Action: A motion was made by Finnerty, seconded by Macey, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

Resolutions

3796-08 A Resolution Approving a Project for the benefit of Carnegie Mellon University (the "University") to be financed by the Allegheny County Higher Education Building Authority by the issuance of the Authority's tax-exempt or taxable bonds, to be issued in one or more series, in the aggregate principal amount not to exceed \$135,000,000 including required reserves (if any) and costs of issuance, provided that the taxing power of the County of Allegheny, Pennsylvania, shall not be obligated in any way with respect to the Bonds (hereinafter defined), and determining that the purpose of the financing will be to benefit the health and welfare of the citizens of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania.

Sponsors: Chief Executive

Action: A motion was made by Macey, seconded by Finnerty, that this matter be Affirmatively Recommended. The motion carried unanimously.

V. Adjournment