

**HORSHAM LAND REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
MEETING MINUTES  
WEDNESDAY • JANUARY 15, 2014 • 3:30 PM**

In Attendance:

Authority Board

W. William Whiteside, III, Chair  
Joanna M. Furia, Vice Chair (absent)  
William Donnelly  
Dr. Curtis Griffin  
Mark McCouch

HLRA Staff

Michael J. McGee  
Tom Ames  
William Walker (absent)  
Mary Eberle, Esquire

Chairman Whiteside called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m. in the Horsham Township Municipal Building at 1025 Horsham Road, Horsham PA 19044 and led those in attendance in the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag.

Mr. Whiteside started the meeting by asking if there were any questions or comments from the public; there were none.

Mr. Whiteside asked for the will of the Board regarding the minutes of the HLRA meeting on December 18, 2013. It was moved by Mr. McCouch, seconded by Dr. Griffin, to approve the minutes of the December 18, 2013 HLRA meeting. All voted in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Whiteside asked Mr. McGee to provide the Executive Director's Report. Mr. McGee indicated he had no report at this time.

Mr. Whiteside asked for the Solicitor's Report. Ms. Eberle indicated she had no report at this time.

Mr. Whiteside asked for the will of the Board regarding the list of checks. It was moved by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Dr. Griffin, to approve the list of checks in the amount of \$51,546.51. All in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Whiteside moved to the next item on the agenda concerning the Navy's draft Environmental Impact Statement. Mr. McGee shared with the Board that the Navy had published for comment the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and had two public meetings on Monday and Tuesday of this week allowing the public to comment on the draft. He added that the public comment period was open until February 10, 2014 and that the HLRA staff was preparing comments which will be submitted. Mr. McGee shared with the Board that there was much confusion from the public as to what an EIS exactly is and explained that it is a major study not focused only on environmental investigation or cleanup but instead covers all socio-economic impacts of the redevelopment. He added that the document was very comprehensive study and over 700 pages in total.

Greg Preston, head of the Navy's BRAC Program Management Office East, was then introduced and explained the highlights of the EIS to the Board. He noted that over 90 people attended the two day public meeting period. He stated that the typical questions covered three topics; (1) when is development moving forward (2) concerns about the development and the traffic it will bring and (3) drone issue (Mr. Preston noted that the drone issue had nothing to do with the redevelopment of the Navy base). Regarding the timing of the Record of Decision (ROD), Mr. Preston indicated that the

Navy would continue to accept comments until February 10, 2014 then the Navy would respond to all of the comments and issue a Final EIS and ROD within the May/June, 2014 timeframe. Mr. Preston provided that the purpose of the EIS was not to investigate BRAC decision but to examine potential outcomes of three alternatives; (1) HLRA plan (2) HLRA plan with more intense housing and (3) an aviation use.

Mr. McGee voiced that if the ROD was done in June, 2014 that would be terrific for the HLRA. He explained to the Board that the Navy is not voting or coming up with their own plan; they are just studying the plan and coming up with impacts for all three alternatives. He further explained that the decision on the redevelopment was not a Navy decision; it is the HLRA Board decision. Mr. McGee added that a fourth alternative was also studied; "no action" and that would let the property decay and become an untaxable eyesore.

Mr. McGee stated the airport option (as presented in the EIS) was not proposed by anyone and the HLRA Board had determined it was not a viable option. He also commented that he disagreed with the base year of 2010 being used for all four alternatives. He indicated that by 2010 the military was already in a stand down mode and the number of military and civilian jobs had already declined significantly. Further in 2010, there were only 1,200 air operations whereas in the late 1970's there were over 69,000 air operations which is a significant difference. Mr. Preston indicated that he could not respond to particular comments until the end of the comment period.

Mr. McGee advised the Board that in his opinion the EIS was a ringing endorsement of the economic viability of the HLRA's Redevelopment Plan. Mr. McGee asked about a section in the EIS regarding an ongoing review of Native American Resources and historic properties. Mr. Preston explained that the PA State Historical Preservation Officer is still reviewing the information but he did not foresee a problem with that review. Mr. McGee added that the Draft EIS states that there were no structures eligible for inclusion on the National Registry of Historical Places and there were only a few areas where historical artifacts might be present. Mr. Preston added that there much of the base has already been disturbed with utility lines in the past and these will not interfere with the final EIS.

Mr. McGee commented on the Navy's plan to transfer the property in three phases as described in documents called FOSTs (Finding of Suitability to Transfer). The HLRA staff has been working with the Navy to increase the area covered by FOST #1 the property in the middle of the base from Keith Valley Road to past Maple Avenue; FOST #2 includes the buildings on Easton Road and FOST #3 is the land along Horsham Road where the fire training center and two landfills were located. A question from Mr. McGee on when we will have the first property back on the local tax rolls was answered by Mr. Preston. He stated that the Navy expected to transfer the first property by the end of this year. He stated that the Navy is still investigating the areas covered by FOST #2. The Navy's goal is to protect human health and the environment and that "science drives" those types of determinations. He added that the Navy wants to transfer FOST #2 as quickly as possible but they cannot do so until they can make the statement that the site is fully protected.

It was pointed out by Mr. McGee that traffic was indicated as being a major issue. He indicated that he disagreed with the EIS report stating traffic was a primarily an existing problem that is exacerbated by projected growth other than the base redevelopment and the traffic generated by redevelopment of the base mostly impacted a few intersections. He added that the Navy and the HLRA need to address the traffic issues in order to make the property marketable. The HLRA will need help getting funding from federal, state, and local officials. Mr. Donnelly commented that traffic will be worse if we only get the area covered by FOST #1 without both roads coming through the base. Mr. McGee stated that there is

no justification to take the property if there is no access to it. He added that Norristown Road and Privet Road must be extended through the base or a developer will more than likely not be interested.

Mr. Whiteside commented that there were no glaring issues in the EIS between the preferred redevelopment plan and the alternatives. Mr. Preston indicated that, in the public meetings, no one was saying that the EIS report had major gaps, most folks seemed to be on board. Dr. Griffin added that he thought the report supplied the HLRA with great information on the impact on the community.

Mr. Whiteside indicated the next item on the agenda was to authorize the HLRA staff to submit the Economic Development Conveyance (EDC) application. Mr. McGee announced that the Board had conducted an executive session previously to review various aspects of the EDC application to include real estate appraisals, feasibility estimates and evaluations of the potential acquisition of the surplus property. He further announced that the Board would enter into another executive session to receive updates on those matters immediately following this meeting. Mr. McGee reminded the Board that the EDC application is a real estate negotiation; the Navy wants value out of the property while the HLRA needs to insure the development is financially feasible. Mr. McGee noted that the EDC application included all documentation required per the statute. Mr. McGee indicated that the plan was to submit the EDC application before the end of this month and was looking for the Board's authorization to proceed. It was moved by Mr. Donnelly, seconded by Mr. McCouch, to authorize the HLRA staff to submit the Economic Development Conveyance application. All voted in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Whiteside indicated the next item on the agenda was to authorize the HLRA staff to seek Statement of Qualifications (SOQ) from qualified real estate development teams to respond to Request for Qualifications (RFQ). Mr. McGee reminded the Board of the past discussions on how the property should be developed and the need to explore a master developer arrangement. The Board approving the RFQ is the first step to solicit nationwide requests for qualifications from master developers. A short list of qualified firms would be developed and those firms would be requested to submit proposals with details on how they will implement the plan. It was moved by Mr. McCouch, seconded by Dr. Griffin, to authorize the HLRA staff to advertise the Request for Qualifications (RFQ). All voted in favor, motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Whiteside announced that the next Horsham Land Redevelopment Authority meeting would be on February 19, 2014 at 3:30 p.m. in the Horsham Township Municipal Building. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:12 p.m.

Respectfully,



William T. Walker  
HLRA Secretary