

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
JOINT COMMITTEE ON ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY
DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT
AND CONTRACTS
SPECIAL MEETING
MAY 16, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: Scott Burns, Co-chair; Maria Valle, Co-chair; Jorge Cruz, Frederick Hodges, Ernest Newton, Michelle Lyons, Rolanda Smith, Aidee Nieves, Council President

OTHER: Thomas Gaudett, Deputy Chief of Staff; Bill Coleman, Deputy Director of OPED; Deborah Sims; Atty. Edward Lavernoich; Atty. Ronald Pacacha

CALL TO ORDER

Co-chair called the meeting to order at 6:19 P.M. There was a quorum present.

APPROVAL OF JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES: MARCH 17, 2022 (SPECIAL MEETING)

This item was not addressed at this time.

APPROVAL OF JOINT COMMITTEE MINUTES: SEPTEMBER 13, 2022 (SPECIAL MEETING)

This item was not addressed at this time.

54-22

PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MT. GROWMORE LAND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND GROUND LEASE AGREEMENT WITH EAST END NRZ MARKET & CAFÉ, INC. FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 329 CENTRAL AVENUE, 118 AND 124 SUGGETTS LANE AND 128 TROWEL STREET. (NOTE: THIS ITEM CAN BE FOUND ON THE CITY CLERK'S WEBSITE: CITY COUNCIL AGENDAS/MINUTES; CITY COUNCIL; 2022-2023; FULL/MINUTES/SIZE; 2023-04-17.PDF)

Mr. Coleman came forward to speak on this item. He provided an overview of the item for those present. He noted that there had been a wonderful turnout at the recent public hearing on the item. The site is infamous for environmental injustice and is trying to be righted by the environmental justice movement. The site has been cleaned up with the help of the federal government and others. They have been looking for a way to move forward on a community-based project.

The ground lease agreement and the development agreement will allow the Council to approve it for the East End NRZ Market & Café Inc. They plan to create a hydroponic container farming operation to be augmented and complemented by a broader greenhouse growing operation and a community wellness center. The City's role is to finish the final preparations of the site. He reviewed what this would entail including installing utilities. The lease can last for as much as 50

years. It's a 20-year lease with two 15-year renewal periods. East End NRZ Market & Café will have responsibility for the site once they enter into the lease. He reviewed what this responsibility would entail.

A representative for East End NRZ Market & Café came forward to discuss this item. They reviewed the history of the site and project for those present. They outlined their future plans for the site including container farming and using it as a job-training site. They are also looking to work on Johnson's Creek as well.

Council Member Newton expressed his thanks towards the people working on the project. He said that this was the first time that the federal, state, and local government were all working on the project. Further discussion followed.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER NEWTON MOVED TO APPROVE ITEM 54-22 PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE MT. GROWMORE LAND DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT AND GROUND LEASE AGREEMENT WITH EAST END NRZ MARKET & CAFÉ, INC. FOR THE PROPERTIES LOCATED AT 329 CENTRAL AVENUE, 118 AND 124 SUGGETTS LANE AND 128 TROWEL STREET.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED THE MOTION.**

Co-chair Burns asked for clarification on the terms of the contracts.

Mr. Coleman explained that there were two related deals in the development agreement and the lease. He explained the details of both to those present. Further review of the contract details followed.

Co-chair Burns asked if they would owe personal property tax on whatever was established on the site.

Mr. Coleman said that the property itself would be tax-exempt. Further review of the taxes followed. Mr. Coleman said that the matter was, effectively, left to the assessor. It was also clarified that there was a defined permitted use of the property that had to be honored throughout the term. Notice would need to be given if other parties were coming onto the property to use it.

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

ADJOURNMENT

**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER SMITH SECONDED THE MOTION.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:42 P.M.

Respectfully Submitted

Ian A. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services

City of Bridgeport
Joint Committee on ECD&E and Contracts
Special Meeting
May 16, 2023