

**Request for Action
By
Board of Commissioners**

**Approval of Developer for 700 Victory Highway, West Greenwich
(Women’s Development Corporation)**

A. SUMMARY

This Request for Action (“RFA”) is for approval to designate Women’s Development Corporation as developer for the acquisition and development of 700 Victory Highway, West Greenwich, Rhode Island (the “Development”).

The Development consists of 59 undeveloped acres of land on Victory Highway (Route 102) approximately one mile north of Exit 14B on Interstate 95 South in West Greenwich. Site electricity is serviced by Rhode Island Energy, and there is no natural gas service in the area. The site is not serviced by public water or public sewer. There is an existing operational wellhead on site, expansion of which will need approval from the RI Department of Health. The Development is situated next to the Blueberry Heights Mobile Home Park (“BBH”) which includes 29 mobile homes. BBH receives its domestic water from the wellhead on the Property. A new water line from the wellhead to BBH was installed in 2013, runs along the Route 102 edge of the Property, and is protected by an easement.

This parcel was acquired in 2002 by the Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) Land Bank for \$400,000, and has been held in the Land Bank since that time pending unsuccessful attempts to develop the site by a previous sponsor.

On October 2, 2023, RIHousing issued the new RFP to designate a qualified developer. The RFP was posted on the RIHousing website, the State of Rhode Island purchasing website, and sent to a distribution list of RIHousing development partners including developers and participants via an email announcement. The RFP set forth the following evaluation criteria:

- Professional capacity to undertake the Scope of Work;
- Ability to perform within time and budget constraints;
- Evaluation of proposed project approach, including number and depth of affordability of units;
- Creative site layout that minimizes impact on the surrounding environment and fits in with the character of the Town;
- Previous work experience and performance;
- Recommendations by references;
- Financial capacity of the Developer; soundness of plan of finance;
- Affirmative action plan; and
- Other pertinent information provided.

RIHousing received three responses to the RFP from the following entities: Neighborworks Blackstone River Valley, a joint venture between Francis X. Spinella and STAND Corporation, and Women’s Development Corporation (“WDC”). A committee comprised of the Deputy Executive

Director, Chief Administrative Officer, and Director of Real Estate Development of RIHousing (the “Selection Committee”) analyzed the RFP responses against the evaluation criteria. The three proposals were competitively ranked according to factors outlined in the RFP. The Selection Committee interviewed each proposed developer to gain further insight into details of their development plan, and the proposals were also shared with a group of Town Councilors and Town Staff from West Greenwich for their feedback. While the Town feedback was not a determinative factor in the selection, RIHousing staff felt it important to discuss, given the decades of difficulty developing the site. The Selection Committee unanimously approved WDC as the selected developer for the Development.

WDC’s proposal envisions a fully affordable family development consisting of 44 units with a unit mix of 4 one-bedrooms, 16 two-bedrooms, and 24 three-bedrooms. Affordability will be set between 30-80% of area median income (“AMI”), with 11 units at 30% of AMI, 20 units at 60% of AMI, and 13 units at 80% of AMI. The preliminary design is consistent with the architectural character of West Greenwich and builds upon WDC’s experiences developing housing in other rural communities in Exeter, Richmond, and Charlestown. WDC intends to seek rental subsidies for the 30% AMI units and will provide onsite property management and resident service coordination through its affiliated company, Housing Opportunities Corporation.

Staff is recommending the approval of the attached resolution approving Women’s Development Corporation as the developer for the development of 700 Victory Highway, subject to certain conditions as set forth in the attached Resolution.

B. ATTACHMENT

A. Resolution

Attachment A
Resolution of the Board of Commissioners of
Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation

- Whereas,** in 2002, Rhode Island Housing and Mortgage Finance Corporation (“RIHousing”) acquired a 59-acre parcel located in West Greenwich (“the “Development”) via its Land Bank;
- Whereas,** RIHousing issued a Request for Proposals (“RFP”) seeking a developer for the acquisition and development of the Development;
- Whereas,** in response to the RFP, RIHousing received three proposals to develop the Development;
- Whereas,** RIHousing staff has completed a thorough evaluation of the three proposals submitted for the Development; and
- Whereas,** the Selection Committee has determined that Women’s Development Corporation (the “Developer”) submitted the proposal that best meets the goals of RIHousing in accordance with the criteria set forth in the RFP.

NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS HEREBY:

Resolved, that RIHousing does hereby approve and designate Women’s Development Corporation as the developer for the acquisition and development of 700 Victory Highway located in West Greenwich, Rhode Island.

Resolved, that the foregoing resolution is subject to the following conditions:

- Women’s Development Corporation’s satisfaction, in the sole judgment of RIHousing, of all terms and conditions set forth in the RFP;
- Submission of an initial funding application for resources necessary for the development of the Development to the applicable funding entity, with preliminary approval of funding received, within nine months of this approval;
- Closing on real estate and all financing relative to the Development within 12 months of this approval;
- RIHousing approval of all development team members;
- RIHousing approval of the construction budget, scope of work, and construction contractor;
- RIHousing approval of the operating budget for the Development; and
- Agreement by the Developer to purchase the Development for no less than the amount in Developer’s initial proposal.

Resolved, that the Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director and the Director of Real Estate Development, each acting singly, be, and each hereby is, authorized to take any and all actions, including specifically the authority to execute a development agreement, as well as execute any and all documents, instruments and other agreements

and to take such further actions as he or she deems necessary to carry out the above resolution.