

**ANIZDA Public Improvement Committee
MEETING MINUTES
September 29, 2023**

**America On Wheels
2nd Floor Meeting Room
5 North Front Street, Allentown, PA**

Attendance

Committee Attendees: Pedro Torres (Chairperson), Nelson Diaz, Jane Heft and Jesus Sadiua. Absent was Seymour Traub, Esquire.

Board Staff: Steve Bamford (Executive Director), Jerome B. Frank, Esquire, (ANIZDA Solicitor) and Selma Ritter (Manager, Finance and Administration).

Presenters: Vicky Kistler, Director of Department of Community and Economic Development, City of Allentown; Robert DiLorenzo, Director of Planning & Construction, City Center Investment Corporation.

1. **Call to Order.** The meeting was called to order by Committee Chairperson P. Torres at 11:03 a.m. The meeting had been dutifully advertised in advance. A quorum was met.
2. **Approval of February 09, 2022 Meeting Minutes.** A motion to approve the February 09, 2022 meeting minutes, as written, was made by N. Diaz and seconded by J. Heft. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No comment was received. The minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 4-0.
3. **Public Comment on all matters to be acted upon.** Comments were deferred until the matters were to be acted upon.
4. **Old Business.** None.
5. **New Business.** Prior to the presentation of the two projects before the Committee this evening, S. Bamford explained that ANIZDA funds approved public improvement projects through a \$10,000,000 line of credit (“LOC”) from People’s Security Bank & Trust (“Peoples”). Currently, there is approximately \$217,000 outstanding on the LOC. There is approximately \$1,762,000 in cash on deposit at Peoples available to fund public improvement projects. The LOC is secured by excess Neighborhood Improvement Zone (“NIZ”) revenues available after the annual principal and interest payments are made on Developer Dedicated Indebtedness and the arena bonds and after

\$22,000,000 is returned to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The LOC matures in June 2025 and may be extended for an additional 3 years to June 2028.

ANIZDA worked with sponsors of the approved projects to develop a draw schedule and forecast. If the Committee were to recommend both projects presented this evening, and the ANIZDA Board were to approve them, the forecast indicates the LOC could be paid off by May 2026, assuming no additional projects were approved and assuming there was sufficient excess NIZ revenue to make \$4,000,000 payments in 2024 and 2025.

The City of Allentown (the “City”) is the public property owner for both projects on the agenda this evening. City Center Investment Corporation (“CCIC”) is the sponsor for both of the projects.

S. Bamford then introduced Vicky Kistler, Director, Department of Community and Economic Development, representing the City, and Robert DiLorenzo, Director, Planning & Construction, representing CCIC.

V. Kistler introduced both projects. She discussed the positive social transformations within the downtown area and the impact of investment in public improvements.

a. 800 block of Hamilton Street streetscape – City of Allentown and City Center Investment Corporation. R. DiLorenzo described the proposed project. The 800 block of Hamilton Street streetscape project will further the Hamilton Streetscape rhythm by completing the missing link connecting new streetscapes in 500-600 blocks and 900-1100 blocks of Hamilton Street. The project will enhance other NIZ investments and create a safe and walkable environment. This project would support the businesses, patrons, residents, and visitors. The improvements would include new landscaping, street trees, lighting, new curbing and sidewalks, benches and bicycle racks. The overall budget for this project is \$2,960,994.

A motion to recommend the 800 block of Hamilton Street streetscape project proceed to the ANIZDA Board for consideration was made by N. Diaz and seconded by J. Heft. The public was given the opportunity to comment. No comment was received. The recommendation was unanimously approved by a vote of 4-0.

b. Downtown Wayfinding Signage – City of Allentown and City Center Investment Corporation. R. DiLorenzo described the project. A wayfinding system is crucial to branding & navigating in the city, boosting economic growth, and increasing visitation. The improvements would include entrance signs (mile marker signs coming into the City), vehicular signs (directs vehicle drivers to landmarks), pedestrian directions (directs pedestrians to landmarks), parking directionals with the

names of the parking decks (directs vehicle drivers to parking facilities), district identification signs (calls out different districts, e.g., arts), and pedestrian kiosks with static maps (navigates pedestrians to points of interest).

P. Torres asked if the wayfinding signage would be consistent throughout the City. V. Kistler stated the wayfinding is part of a comprehensive plan throughout the City, therefore, they are expecting the signage to be consistent with the same design. To be clear, the request to ANIZDA is for funding for signage only within the NIZ.

The budget for the project is \$348,912.

A motion to recommend the Downtown Wayfinding Signage project proceed to the ANIZDA Board for consideration was made by J. Heft and seconded by N. Diaz. The public was given the opportunity to comment.

Lin Erickson, Executive Director and CEO of the DaVinci Science Center, said the signage would be important for the success of the center. No further public comment was received.

The recommendation was unanimously approved by a vote of 4-0.

6. **Adjournment.** The meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Pedro Torres, Chairperson

