



FITCHBURG REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
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# MEETING MINUTES

May 3, 2022

Fitchburg Redevelopment Authority Office  
166 Boulder Drive, Suite 104 East, Fitchburg, Massachusetts

*Meeting held in person and via Zoom*

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Charles Caron, Chair  
Jay Roy, Vice Chair  
Chris Bujold, Treasurer  
Laura Bayless, PhD, Member  
Laura O’Kane, Member

**OTHERS PRESENT:** Jackie Cullen, River Styx Brewing, LLC  
Scott Cullen, River Styx Brewing, LLC  
Rebecca Baker, River Styx Brewing, LLC  
Robert Marion, Food Truck Owner  
Meagen Donoghue, Executive Director, FRA  
Tony Amico, Facilities Manager, FRA  
Sarah Stebulis, Business Administrator, FRA

## 1. MEETING CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Caron called meeting to order at 7:31 a.m.

## 2. GENERAL BUSINESS

### A. Vote to approve the Urban Renewal Plan

Ms. Donoghue applauded everyone’s time and effort in creating, editing and supporting the proposed 2040 Urban Renewal Plan over the past couple years. She stated that the Board should have a lot of pride in this milestone.

*Dr. Bayless motioned to approve the proposed 2040 Urban Renewal Plan. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried by 5-0 vote.*

### B. Food Truck @ Putnam Place

Ms. Donoghue stated that per the Board's last regular meeting, the food truck owner and River Styx were notified of the Board's decision that the food truck must vacate the parking lot, effective immediately. As of this meeting, the truck has not been moved and there has been much back and fourth between Robert Marion, River Styx and the FRA. This has been added to the agenda to get all parties on the same page and create a plan for going forward. Mr. Caron opened by stating the food truck is currently parked illegally, and there was an inspection of the truck itself on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2022 which both he and Mr. Bujold attended. He and Mr. Bujold met with Mr. Marion after the inspection and was under the impression that they had come to an agreement and understanding, but in the hours after that conversation, Ms. Cullen from River Styx left messages at the FRA stating that Mr. Marion did not want to work with the FRA. Ms. O'Kane asked what the status of the registration plates were, to which Mr. Marion said they were coming today. Ms. O'Kane stated that nothing should really be up for discussion at this point because the truck is not registered, and no agreements have been made with the FRA as owners of this property.

Mr. Bujold informed the Board that changes have been made to the building and to the electrical panel without permission to make the food truck a permanent fixture. Ms. O'Kane stated that this needs to go through the proper channels to make this venture happen, which includes involving the city in the discussion. Mr. Bujold agreed and added that the parking lot lease explicitly states that no changes can be made to the space without written agreement by both parties and the food truck has been illegally parked in one of our ADA parking spaces. Mr. Marion stated that he wanted to make sure the food truck location and agreement is beneficial to all parties, since his original agreement was with River Styx. Mr. Bujold stated that the Board's time is precious and volunteered and after spending a great deal of time the previous day working with him, he wanted to know what changed from that discussion. Ms. Cullen spoke to the background of how and why they wanted a food truck on site.

Mr. Bujold stated that the FRA tried to triage this situation for the last 4 days, which included receiving many inappropriate phone calls and text messages to staff and Board members by Ms. Cullen. The bottom line is that the property is owned by the FRA and there are two options; come to an agreement directly with the food truck owner for another location on the property or remove it all together. Ms. Cullen apologized for getting out of hand and said that River Styx is ready to move forward with the updated parking lot lease with the seasonal fee if it helps the situation. Mr. Roy stated that he is okay with the food truck being on the property, but it must go through the proper channels. Ms. Cullen asked if it can be within River Styx's patio area. Mr. Bujold stated that there are liability issues, and this would need to be an individual lease with the food truck owner. He reminded them that subletting is not allowed in the lease and tampering with the electrical panel is already a major violation of the lease.

Mr. Caron stated that the Board asks for the food truck to be moved immediately, and for Mr. Marion to return to the FRA to go through the proper channels to obtain permission to be on site at a regularly scheduled meeting. Mr. Marion added that the food truck is fully insured and licensed and he is eager to get it up and running as soon as possible. He agreed that he would move it today. Mr. Roy asked if food trucks are allowed to be parked places permanently, to which Mr. Marion said yes, with the owner's permission.

*Jackie Cullen, Scott Cullen, Robert Marion and Rebecca Baker all left the meeting at 8:06 a.m.*

### **3. ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

Ms. Donoghue updated the Board that Work Inc. has decided to pass on leasing space at Putnam Place.

Ms. Donoghue stated that she did get a call to inquire if the FRA would still be interested purchasing in 1 Wood Place. It is currently vacant as it is not handicapped accessible but does qualify for being grandfathered in with some minor changes to make the first floor accessible. Ms. Donoghue stated that we have previously been interested in this property, but it is not an identified property in our Urban Renewal Plan, but she believes we could make a case to amend the plan and add it based on it needing to be updated to allow for handicapped accessibility. She thinks it could be a great project for Attorney Christine Tree to work on for us, having her do the amendment paperwork and making the case for adding it to our Urban Renewal Plan. Mr. Bujold stated that building could provide useful space to be an incubator for small scale businesses who just need desk space or limited office time, similar to the WeWork model. Mr. Caron stated that he heard the city wanted to take that building. Mr. Roy asked if it was on a historical register that would prevent the City from taking it or from being demolished. Mr. Bujold asked how badly we would want it versus the potential agreement with Fitchburg State University to use the Theater Block space. Ms. Donoghue stated that Theater Block space will be an extensive build-out which will be our financial responsibility, and it will only be temporary, for no more than 5 years. She added that 1 Wood Place is basically turn-key as far as moving in, we just need to add the ADA ramp and update the bathrooms for ADA accessibility. Mr. Caron asked what the price point was. Ms. Donoghue stated that we would need two appraisals and would legally have to pay somewhere between them. Ms. O’Kane noted that she thinks the building on Main Street where Kingston Island Restaurant currently should be our main priority for redevelopment. Mr. Caron asked how the process moves forward. Ms. Donoghue asked the Board if she can engage Christine Tree to start looking into the project and the Board all agreed that she would move forward with that.

*Jay Roy left the meeting at 8:15 a.m.*

The Board further discussed the background of the food truck being on site and how the Board could move forward to make it legitimate.

#### **4. ADJOURNMENT**

*Mr. Caron motioned to adjourn the executive session Board meeting at 8:32 am. Seconded by Ms. O’Kane. The motion carried 4-0.*

**NEXT MEETING SCHEDULED:** May 17, 2022

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah U. Stebulis  
Business Administrator