

ORDINANCE

WHEREAS, The City of Chicago (“**City**”) is a home rule unit of government by virtue of the provisions of the Constitution of the State of Illinois of 1970, and as such, may exercise any power and perform any function pertaining to its government and affairs; and

WHEREAS, The City, through the foreclosure of demolition liens, tax sales and other methods of acquisition, has acquired title to thousands of parcels of vacant land which are costly to clean up and maintain, do not generate property taxes, and are a detriment to the community; and

WHEREAS, The City has traditionally sold much of its land directly to purchasers after receiving property inquiries, a method which is inefficient, labor-intensive and also lacks transparency; and

WHEREAS, In an effort to attract and reach potential buyers and create a more competitive process, the Department of Planning and Development (the “**Department**”) created chiblockbuilder.com (“**ChiBlockBuilder**”), a website-based platform for selling vacant City-owned property with predetermined purchase prices and online application materials; and

WHEREAS, ChiBlockBuilder allows prospective buyers to view a map of available properties online and apply to purchase lots for targeted purposes; and

WHEREAS, City lots sold through the ChiBlockBuilder platform are offered with their current zoning; and

WHEREAS, The Department retained the services of CBRE Group, Inc. to provide market value assessments of the available City-owned properties based on comparable sales, and these market value assessments are posted on the ChiBlockBuilder website to establish purchase prices for all properties marketed for sale; and

WHEREAS, The Department advertised more than 100 City-owned lots for sale on the ChiBlockBuilder website in a special round of bidding dedicated to urban agriculture, which began on November 1, 2023, and ended on November 30, 2023 (the “**Urban Ag Round**”); and

WHEREAS, A public notice directing prospective applicants to ChiBlockBuilder for listings of City-owned property for sale was published in the Chicago Tribune on November 2, 9, 16 and 30; and

WHEREAS, Urban agriculture increases equitable community access to healthy foods, promotes community cohesion, and provides business and educational opportunities to neighborhood residents; and

WHEREAS, Applications were evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Priority given to projects with evidence of clear commitment and financial and technical support to maintain site, including funding, partnerships with other organizations and clear plans for identifying further funding;

- Priority given to projects with clear plans and designs and realistic timeline, and that are ready to start activating the land during Fall 2024/Winter 2025;
- Project proposal plan and design have measurable and achievable goals to grow food;
- Priority given to projects that have support from neighbors, aldermen, other growers, or organizations as indicated through letters of support and clear plans to engage the community they want to grow in.
- Priority given to projects that will provide/sell food for the community they grow in;
- Priority given to applicants residing in Chicago with connections to the neighborhood they are applying in;
- Priority given to applicants from communities disproportionately impacted by food insecurity;
- Priority given to projects where the applicant has previous experience with urban agriculture and similar projects; and

WHEREAS, The Department selected two proposals in the Urban Ag Round, both from NeighborSpace Inc. (the “**Buyer**”); one for a project called the Dante Avenue Farm in Ward 5, and the other for a project called Fresher Together in Ward 10 (each, a “**Project**”) and

WHEREAS, the Buyer is a not-for-profit corporation incorporated under the laws of the State of Illinois on May 29, 1996, exclusively for charitable, scientific and educational purposes, including, but not limited to, the preservation of open space and parks within the City; and

WHEREAS, The Projects are further described and the City lots for each Project (each, a “**City Lot**”) are identified in Exhibit A attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, The names of all applicants for the City Lots and a summary of the Department’s evaluation of the proposals are set forth in Exhibit B attached hereto; and

WHEREAS, The Department desires to convey the City Lots to the Buyer; and

WHEREAS, The Buyer has agreed to purchase the City Lots for \$1.00 each (the “**Purchase Price**”); and

WHEREAS, after transfer of the City Lots to the Buyer, the Buyer will collaborate with community members and each Project will be managed by the community; and

WHEREAS, The City Lot for the Dante Farm is located in the 71st & Stony Island Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project Area established by ordinances adopted by the City Council on October 7, 1998, as amended, and the City Lots for the Fresher Together project are located in the South Chicago Tax Increment Financing Redevelopment Project Area established

by ordinances adopted by the City Council on April 12, 2000, as amended, and

WHEREAS, By resolution numbers 24-CDC-13 and 24-CDC-14 adopted on April 9, 2024, the Community Development Commission recommended the disposition of the City Lots in the foregoing redevelopment project areas to the Buyer; and

WHEREAS, By resolution numbers 24-012-21 and 24-013-21 adopted on March 21, 2024, the Chicago Plan Commission approved the disposition of the City Lots to the Buyer; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF CHICAGO:

SECTION 1. The foregoing recitals, findings and statements of fact are incorporated herein and made a material part of this ordinance.

SECTION 2. The City Council hereby approves the sale of the City Lots to the Buyer for the Projects in their “as is” condition for the Purchase Price.

SECTION 3. The Mayor or the Mayor’s proxy is authorized to execute, and the City Clerk or the Deputy City Clerk is authorized to attest, quitclaim deeds (each, a “**Deed**”) conveying the City Lots for each Project to the Buyer, or to a land trust of which the Buyer is the sole beneficiary, or to an entity of which the Buyer is the sole controlling party or which is comprised of the same principal parties, in substantially the form attached hereto as Exhibit C.

SECTION 4. The Commissioner of the Department (“**Commissioner**”), or a designee of the Commissioner, is each hereby authorized, with the approval of the City’s Corporation Counsel as to form and legality, to negotiate, execute and deliver such documents as may be necessary or appropriate to carry out and comply with the provisions of this ordinance, with such changes, deletions and insertions as shall be approved by the Commissioner or the Commissioner’s designee. Such documents may contain terms and provisions that the Commissioner or the Commissioner’s designee deems appropriate, including indemnification, releases, affidavits and other documents as may be reasonably necessary to remove exceptions from title with respect to the City Lots or otherwise may be reasonably necessary or appropriate to consummate the transaction contemplated hereby.

SECTION 5. If any provision of this ordinance shall be held to be invalid or unenforceable for any reason, the invalidity of such provision shall not affect any of the other provisions of this ordinance.

SECTION 6. This ordinance shall take effect upon its passage and approval.