



**APPROVED  
MINUTES  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING  
Tuesday, February 25, 2014, City Council Chambers  
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**

**Call to Order:** Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:03 p.m.

**Roll Call:** Kelly Mierkowski called the roll. A quorum was present.

**Commission Members Present:** Fred Cobb, Chris Diana (arrived at 7:03pm), Jerry Moreland, Janice Bengtson, and Anne Heinze Silvis.

**Commission Members Excused:** Lisabeth Searing

**Others Present:** Kelly H. Mierkowski, Jennifer Gonzalez, and Jenell Hardy, Community Development Services.

**Approval of Minutes:** *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or modifications to the January 28, 2014 minutes. Commissioner Silvis moved to approve the minutes with corrections, stating Commissioner Diana's name was misspelled on page 4 and Commissioner Bengtson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

**Petitions and Communications:** None.

**Staff Report:** Kelly Mierkowski, Grants Management Division Manager, provided a brief overview of the staff report provided to the Commissioners. Ms. Mierkowski stated that, the City received from HUD a confirmation letter re acknowledgement of final close out and transmittal of closeout agreement for the CDBG-R Program (Green St. Project), in 2009.

HUD also requested CDBG Success Stories, as this year is the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the CDBG Program, so the City of Champaign with cooperation from the City of Urbana and the State of Illinois submitted information regarding Crisis Nursery since Champaign, Urbana, and the State all put funds into this facility; the City of Urbana submitted a photo. Hopefully, the information will then be placed on their website.

HUD sent a notice and email reminder that when the budget is passed; it still takes time for funds to actually be allocated to their agency. Once they receive their allocation, then they (HUD) run formulas to determine what those funding amounts will be (for their grantees), but will be discussed when we come to new business.

She noted several activities undertaken by staff in the past month. The public hearing was held at Hamilton on the Park on February 18, 2014; there is another neighborhood meeting on March 4, 2014 at Prairie School Library. Those are the highlights; everything else shows what staff has been doing for the last month.

### **Old Business:**

A follow up from the last meeting, Commissioner Diana had asked about agencies that make up the Continuum of Care, so Jenell provided a list of current members of the Continuum of Care. The Memorandums of Understanding are currently being revised and updated with agencies. If there are any changes regarding the membership, then an updated list will be provided.

### **New Business:**

#### **Draft City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium (Champaign/Urbana/Champaign County) Annual Action Plan – FY 2014-2015**

Ms. Mierkowski stated that the Draft Annual Action Plan was made available for public review and comment beginning Monday, February 24, 2014. Copies of the AAP were placed at the Urbana Free Library, the City Clerk's Office (here in the City building), and in Community Development Services Department, and on the City's website. The 30-day comment period will end March 25, 2014, with a public hearing scheduled before this meeting (the regular meeting of the Community Development Commission) at 7:00pm.

HUD sent a notice to all grantees in December, in which grantees were advised not to submit their Annual Action Plan until the FY 2014 formula allocations have been announced. It was also suggested that grantees include a "contingency provision" language in their action plan, which explains how the plan will be adjusted to match the actual allocation amounts, once those amounts are known.

With regard to the CDBG and HOME programs, the proposed budgets for the activities listed in the AAP will be proportionally increased or decreased from the estimated funding levels to match actual allocations that we will receive from HUD. This will be done prior to submitting our Annual Action Plan to HUD for approval. In the draft Annual Action Plan, the wording is noted on page 4 showing what language HUD suggested grantees use. By including this contingency language, the Notice stated that a grantee can avoid the need to make significant revisions to its plan and avoid the potential need to conduct additional citizen participation on a plan, if there happens to be a significant revision in order to reflect actual allocation amounts. With that, Jenell will talk about the CDBG program, and Jen will discuss the HOME program.

Ms. Hardy began on page 29 of the Annual Action Plan, stating that the budget is based on the amount of this fiscal year's allocation until we receive further notification from HUD of our grant allocation. The administration activities, which has a 20% cap, has a budget of about \$74,740. The Affordable Housing Program, which are the programs administered by Randy Burgett, the Housing Rehab Coordinator, through the Emergency and Access Grants, as well as the Senior Repair Service Program, and the delivery of those programs and case preparation. Program Delivery is being estimated at about \$112,000. The breakdown is on page 30 of the Annual Action Plan, which shows that the Emergency and Access Grants are being budgeted at \$60,000 and Senior Repair Service at \$15,000.

On page 31, the Public Services activities are shown, which also has a cap of 15%, which includes three activities: the Urbana Transitional Housing Program, made up of houses owned and operated by the City for homeless families with dependent children; public service activities under the Consolidated Social Service Funding pool, which is a mixture of money between the City General Fund, Cunningham Township Funds, and a portion of our Community Development Block Grant funds; and then Neighborhood Clean Up in our target areas carried out twice a year.

Page 32 of the Annual Action Plan shows some of the carryover activities, which include an estimation of property acquisition, clearance, and demolition activities at \$60,000. There are also a few public facilities and improvements projects, listed on page 33. Funds are still set aside for Kerr Avenue project and City infrastructure projects in our targeted neighborhoods in conjunction with Public Works are listed. With regard to neighborhood streetlight construction, there are still areas in our targeted neighborhoods that do not have streetlights, and so are hoping to work with Public Works again, as we did on Hunter and Austin, where we installed two streetlights. We would consider doing other projects similar to that one, in certain pockets in targeted areas of the City to provide much needed lighting. Page 34 of the Annual Action Plan gives a summary of the budget and what it looks like. The grand total, including carryover, is estimated at \$492,025. Ms. Hardy then asked for any questions re the CDBG budget.

Commissioner Moreland asked about any specific street where the streetlights may be placed in the targeted areas of the City, such as Hunter. Ms. Hardy responded that Hunter Avenue was last year, Kinch Street roughly between Washington and Florida streets is also an area that is being considered for lighting. Commissioner Diana also asked about the estimation for what could be accomplished with this budget. Ms. Hardy stated that if a street lighting project is done, it would be in about two years. If it is done in house, we would save money, by having it installed by Public Works and just doing a small project, just one or two new installation of street lights. The cost for the lighting project at Hunter was roughly \$15,000; some money will be set aside and when we receive our final allocation this year plus what we receive in FY 1516, will determine that we have enough funds to carry out a project like that.

In addition, Ms. Mierkowski stated, we are also waiting on Public Works to give us estimates on several projects, in order to help us determine what we need to set aside. There was a question regarding if Kinch St. is in the target area, and Ms. Hardy stated that it is just inside the target area, the most eastern boundary of Census Tract 56, Block 1. Commissioner Moreland commented that Kinch St. runs north and south but there are streets running east and west of Kinch, that seem dark as well. Ms. Hardy stated that Kinch St. might have also been chosen because there is a newly added bicycle path, so the lighting would help the bike travel; there is also a lot of pedestrian travel on Kinch. But there are other areas, as noted on page 33, under City Infrastructure projects; it is possible that in those same areas, the same may be done as we did on the Matthews Street reconstruction that included street lights. There are a variety of areas and so we are hoping to hit these little pockets over an extended period of time. Commissioner Moreland complimented the City on the Matthews Street project, it really looks good.

Chairperson Cobb asked if there is anything significantly different from prior and Ms. Hardy stated no, what we did, based on the information received, which is not much, using the grant amount from this year, this AAP is very similar to what we are currently doing and the activities that we can carry out with the funds awarded by HUD. So, if our allocation is similar to this, we will adjust it accordingly. Chairperson Cobb asked if the cost percentage for personnel is the same as before, and Ms. Hardy stated that there have not been any increases in personnel costs. The cap is definite at 20%, so we won't be able to spend more than that on personnel; we are very meticulous about staying within that budget guideline.

Chairperson asked for any other questions and commented that the draft AAP will be at the library and online, and Ms. Mierkowski stated that the Draft is at the library now, the draft was place their yesterday. Ms. Hardy then turned it over to Ms. Gonzalez to discuss the HOME budget. Ms. Gonzalez asked the Commission to look at the last page of the Draft FY 1415 AAP, which shows the HOME budget summary, which is a great overview of the way the HOME funds are split up. As the same for the CDBG program, we are basing the HOME program budget off of this year's current allocation of \$693,396. We also put a rough guesstimate of program income of \$37,000 and the match requirement is also listed, which is split among the different Consortium members who are carrying out activities.

Ten percent of the grant is used for administration and below that we list out the 15% required Community Housing Development Organization set-aside which is \$104,009, as well as the CHDO operating which is \$34,669. The balance of \$485,377 is split up amongst the three Consortium members, the City of Urbana, City of Champaign, and Champaign County. The City of Champaign's portion is 54.91%, if you will recall the percentages that were prorated changed a little bit after the U.S. Census was redone, so these numbers are up to date. We are not expecting any changes, so \$246,086 is expected to go to the City of Champaign, and they have been consistently been allocating \$90,000 to their TBRA programs and those are generally subcontracted out, with \$45,000 going to The Center for Women in Transition, and the other \$45,000 has been going to the Champaign County Regional Planning Commission, to assist with augmenting their No Limits TBRA Program. If they do what they have been doing for the last several years that is where we are expecting those funds to go.

The remainder will go under their Neighborhood Revitalization Program, which details various activities that they could undertake. We are expecting them to move forward with the Bristol Place project, we just don't know the timeline quite yet and what that is all going to look like; there has been plenty of press on it. They are gearing up to figure out their funding and how they will structure it, so it is expected that Champaign's funds will largely go to that particular neighborhood.

For the County they have consistently been splitting their funds up between the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program and the Housing Rehabilitation Program; they like to set aside the funds in the event that there is a house that is in desperate need of some code repairs. But in general, they have been moving all their money into the Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program when no housing rehab projects are identified.

For the City of Urbana we are hoping to continue with our successful Whole House Rehabilitation Program, we are still consistently rehabbing between 5-7 houses, which is great especially considering all the funding cuts we have seen. The City Redevelopment Program, which is on the preceding page; we list several different activities. We did take advantage of this with our Down Payment Assistance program, which is something we have been considering. We ran out of the pot of money that we had originally set aside through an amendment, which was \$100,000; we got down to \$40,000, which were funds that we had set aside as match leverage for the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago program, so at this point we have the \$40,000 left but we are waiting for those contracts and the funds to come in from the FHLB to start those final 10 projects moving into the next fiscal year. If it moves quickly and moves well, we might consider amending some of our funds to do something like that, but it would most like come through some sort of amendment and would not be listed in the Plan because it is too early to tell. Ms. Gonzalez stated that is the overview and could answer any questions.

Commissioner Silvis asked about the wording in the Objectives (page 6) re Provide Decent Housing, if that was a technical term. Ms. Gonzalez stated that it was a technical term in terms of being required to bring housing up to the local code standards; so if there is a local code, we have to abide by it. In areas like unincorporated Champaign County, they follow slightly different rules and HUD has guidelines for that as well, but here we follow local code.

Chairperson Cobb asked if there were any other questions or comments on our Draft Annual Action Plan. Ms. Mierkowski suggested that Commissioners continue to review the draft during the 30-day comment period, and if there are other things that come to mind, you can certainly email us; any comments we receive from the public regarding allocations, programs we include it in the Citizen Participation part of our Annual Action Plan when we submit it to HUD, since our Consolidated Plan requires that we get public input, so we make sure to include all that information when we submit it to HUD.

Chairperson Cobb asked if this would be on the next agenda for the next meeting, and Ms. Mierkowski stated that it would, and that there would be a public hearing first, which would be at the end our 30-Day public comment period, with the final on the actual agenda of the regular meeting, because it then has to be approved to go on to Council for their approval. Chairperson Cobb asked if Ms. Mierkowski wanted to bring anything else up, elaborate on something under new business when in the Staff Report. Ms. Mierkowski stated that it was during the discussion of the memo, about the notice from HUD regarding our allocation.

**Adjournment:** Seeing no further business, Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 7:28 p.m.

Recorded by Kelly H. Mierkowski, Manager

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*APPROVED*