



*APPROVED*  
**MINUTES**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING**  
**Tuesday, April 25, 2017, City Council Chambers**  
**400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**

**Call to Order:** Commissioner Silvis called the regular meeting to order at 7:04pm.

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

**Commission Members Present:** Anne Heinze-Silvis, Jerry Moreland, Lauren Karplus, Abdulhakeem Salaam, Chris Diana and Karin Hodgins-Jones

**Commission Members Excused/Absent:** Fred Cobb, Janice Bengtson and Michael Braun

**Others Present:** Kelly Mierkowski and Don Ho, Community Development Services

**Approval of Minutes:** Commissioner Silvis asked for approval or corrections to the March 28, 2017 Public Hearing and regular meeting minutes. Commissioner Salaam moved to approve the minutes as written and Commissioner Moreland seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

**Petitions and Communications:** Commissioner Silvis asked if there was any written communication to the Commission, there were none.

**Audience Participation:** Commissioner Silvis stated that audience members could speak if they so wished, no one from the audience stepped forward to speak.

**Staff Report:** Kelly Mierkowski, Grants Management Manager, provided a brief overview of the staff report provided to the Commissioners that evening, which included HUD activities, staff activities, meetings attended, and various projects and programs.

**Old Business:** None.

**New Business:**

**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE CITY OF URBANA AND URBANA HOME CONSORTIUM FY 2017-2018 ANNUAL ACTION PLAN**

Ms. Mierkowski mentioned that the resolution was also brought up to Council the evening before and today was the final day of the public hearing period. The Plan must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by May 15, 2017. However, HUD has not released any information about how much funding the City would get. As a result, HUD has asked the City to include potential budgets for utilizing the Urbana Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME Investment Partnership Grant (HOME) entitlement funds.

With regard to the City's CDBG and HOME grants, all proposed activities' budgets will be proportionally increased or decreased from the estimated funding levels to match actual allocation amounts, once the City is notified of its allocation prior to submission of the Annual Action Plan (AAP) to HUD for approval, as recommended by the HUD Chicago Field Office staff. Ms. Mierkowski stated that most activities remain the same except for a few activities in HOME and CDBG. For CDBG, program delivery funding will increase to accommodate rising costs and the City will be doing only one Neighborhood Cleanup per fiscal year.

Commissioner Karplus then asked Ms. Mierkowski to explain more about the Transitional Housing program and how the program funds are being used. Ms. Mierkowski explained that the City current has been using two City-owned houses for the program. Most of funding goes towards staff costs, utilities, and residential services for the tenants. At one point, the City used to have five houses in the program.

Staff recommends that the Community Development Commission forward the Resolution to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval. Commissioner Silvis entertained a motion to either forward the Resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval, forward the resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval with changes, or to not forward for approval. Commissioner Diana motioned for the approval of the Resolution. Commissioner Hodgins-Jones seconded the motion; the motion carried.

## **A RESOLUTION APPROVING MODIFICATIONS TO THE CITY OF URBANA AND URBANA HOME CONSORTIUM FY 2014-2015 AND FY 2015-2016 ANNUAL ACTION PLANS**

Ms. Mierkowski stated that the purpose of the resolution approving modifications to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014-2015 and FY 2015-2016 Annual Action Plans is to reduce the City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium's HOME budgets to allow for funding of projects submitted through a Request for Proposals process and selected by the Urbana HOME Consortium.

Funds will be provided from the City of Champaign's allocation of HOME funds and from the City of Urbana's allocation of FY 2014-2015 and FY 2015-2016 HOME funds. The projects selected for funding include Habitat for Humanity's Affordable Homeownership Program, Courage Connection's Tenant Based Rental Assistance plus program delivery, and Navicore/Champaign County Community Reinvestment Group's Downpayment Assistance Program plus program delivery. The total amount of funding to be provided to these projects is \$505,343 which includes \$55,343 in funds to be allocated to Courage Connection and Navicore for program delivery.

Amendments are necessary to address changes in projects that have occurred, to add projects, and to allocate funding in order to be in compliance with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations. The proposed amendments have been on display and available for public review and comment at the City Clerk's office, the Dept. of Community Development Services office, and the Urbana Free Library. Substantial changes to any of the City's Annual Action Plans must be approved by the Urbana City Council before submission to HUD. In order to meet the HOME Commitment issue by August 2017, as required by HUD HOME regulations,

the Urbana HOME Consortium released a Request for Proposal (RFP) to allocate funding that needs to be committed to a project or projects.

Staff recommends that the Community Development Commission forward the Resolution to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval. Commissioner Silvis entertained a motion to either forward the Resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval, forward the resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval with changes, or to not forward for approval. Commissioner Moreland motioned for the approval of the Resolution. Commissioner Karplus seconded the motion; the motion carried.

### **A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ILLINOIS HOUSING DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY ABANDONED PROPERTY PROGRAM**

Ms. Mierkowski explained the Illinois Housing Development Authority (IHDA) created the Abandoned Property Program (APP) in 2013. IHDA utilizes Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund dollars to fund eligible APP activities. It is similar to the Blight Reduction Program (BRP) and administered by the same staff, but the funds come from a difference source. The statewide Abandoned Residential Property Municipality Relief Fund is supported by residential foreclosure complaint filing fees. The Community Development Association assisted in putting together the application and it was approved.

APP cannot be used to acquire properties. APP aims to assist municipalities with costs incurred for maintaining, securing, and clearing abandoned properties within their jurisdictions. The City of Urbana was notified on February 17, 2017 that it had been awarded \$71,000. On March 31, 2017, the City of Urbana executed and submitted a Conditional Commitment Letter to IHDA, which outlines the additional steps that need to be taken by the City of Urbana to accept the funding and begin operating the program. The City will start receiving funding after July 1, 2017

Among the requirements, the Conditional Commitment Letter states that the City of Urbana must submit to IHDA a “[r]esolution or ordinance of the Recipient, certified by the clerk or other authorized municipal official acceptable to the Authority, within thirty (30) days of the Closing Date, authorizing the Project and the execution of the Funding Agreement and any other documents in connection with the Project.”

No APP funding can be used for reimbursement of administration costs. Program funds will be made available to the City of Urbana in the amount of \$71,000, to assist with the reimbursement of eligible costs related to securing, demolishing, and maintaining properties that contain or once contained vacant residential properties throughout the City of Urbana. Those eligible costs are as follows:

- Cutting of neglected weeds or grass
- Trimming of trees or bushes and removal of nuisance bushes and trees
- Extermination of pests or prevention of the ingress of pests
- Removal of garbage, debris and graffiti
- Boarding up, closing off or locking windows or entrances or otherwise making the interior of a building inaccessible to the general public

- Surrounding part or all of an Abandoned Residential Property's underlying parcel with a fence or wall or otherwise making part or all of the Abandoned Residential Property's underlying parcel inaccessible to the general public
- Demolition of Abandoned Residential Property
- Rehabilitation of Abandoned Residential Property

Ms. Mierkowski also mentioned that this program will work well with the Community Development Block Grant program. Commissioner Karplus asked if GMD can use this program or other program to help remove garbage in and near the Highland Green Construction area. Since the construction started, she has seen a huge uptake in trash on Kerr Avenue. It is very alarming to go from a clean neighborhood to a less clean neighborhood. Ms. Mierkowski said it is possible that we might receive more BRP funding. She said she would look into the situation and find out the cause.

Commissioner Diana asked if there is a difference in the definition of “abandoned property” in the program compared to the definition in the Blight Reduction Program. Ms. Mierkowski said that there is no difference between them. The only difference is the funding source, state funds versus federal funds. The program is only for residential properties only and not for commercial properties. Commissioner Diana then mentioned that the budget appears to be recapturing funds from prior years. Is there a problem switching funds back from forth from all the program years? Ms. Mierkowski answered no.

Staff recommends that the Community Development Commission to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation for approval. Commissioner Silvis entertained a motion to either forward the Resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval, forward the resolutions to Council with a recommendation for approval with changes, or to not forward for approval. Commissioner Hodgin-Jones motioned for the approval of the Resolution, Commissioner Salaam seconded the motion; the motion carried.

**Study Session:** None.

**Adjournment:** Seeing no further business, Commissioner Silvis adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m.

Recorded by

Don Ho  
Grants Compliance Specialist, Grants Management Division

*Don Ho*

APPROVED