



**APPROVED
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, April 26, 2016, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801**

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the regular meeting to order at 7:01pm.

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

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, Janice Bengtson, Anne Heinze Silvis, Lisabeth Searing and Jerry Moreland

Commission Members Excused/Absent: Brian Cunningham, Chris Diana, and Lauren Karplus

Others Present: Kelly H. Mierkowski and Matt Rejc, Community Development Services.

Approval of Minutes: Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or modifications to the March 22, 2016 minutes. Commissioner Searing moved to approve the minutes as written and Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Petitions and Communications: Chairperson Cobb asked if there was any written communication to the Commission; there were none.

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

Staff Report: Kelly H. Mierkowski, Grants Management Division 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 (CHAMPAIGN/URBANA/CHAMPAIGN COUNTY) ANNUAL ACTION PLAN FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016-2017

Ms. Mierkowski stated that Mr. Rejc would start and then questions would be answered as they arise. Mr. Rejc stated that the sections would be summarized for the Commissioners, starting with the first sections, which are designated by the interface that we use to complete and submit the document. The first sections shows the programs and budgets for the different programs, which is summarized at the end of the document. Chairperson Cobb asked if the County and City of Champaign portions were approved by them, and Ms. Mierkowski explained that the City of Urbana's CDBG and portion of the HOME grant, along with the County and Champaign's HOME grants as well, are included in this Action Plan, per HUD regulations and requirements. The City of Champaign completes their own Annual

Action Plan for their CDBG grant. Mr. Rejc stated that the amounts are fixed for each entity, but the flexibility is in regard to programs.

Commissioner Bengston commented that there was not much in the way of public attendance at the various public hearings and wondered what could be done to attract participation. Ms. Mierkowski stated that the public hearings are posted on the City website, and notices are placed on site at least two weeks before the hearings. It is not clear why attendance is low for the public hearings, but staff will continue to try to engage the neighborhoods. Chairperson Cobb asked if notices were placed at the library and Ms. Mierkowski stated that the notice regarding the meetings is faxed to the library. Mr. Rejc noted that the Division is working with Natalie Kenny Marquez, the Marketing Coordinator, to look at ways to better get the word out about out programs and meetings, possibly through social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, noting different objectives, goals, and strategies that will be addressed by the different programs. Ms. Mierkowski also noted that the objectives, goals, and strategies originally came from the FY 15-19 Consolidated Plan and are incorporated into this document each year, to show how they are being met. Mr. Rejc pointed out the section showing the public input and information. The next section is the bulk of the plan, showing the various collaborations and partnerships that the City is involved with. The partnerships include United Way, Continuum of Care, etc. Comments are included from agencies who attended a public meeting.

Mr. Rejc noted the various monetary amounts are included in this Annual Action Plan, which also includes the various programs that those funds will be set aside for. Resources expected to be received from HUD are included in this Plan, and the various programs that are under the Community Development Block Grant program were discussed. Ms. Mierkowski noted that also included in the Public Services section, in addition to Transitional Housing, is Neighborhood Cleanup and portion of funding towards the Consolidated Social Service Funding Process. Ms. Mierkowski noted that the next neighborhood cleanup will be held on May 21, 2016 from 8-2pm at King School and Dart/Solo Cup; notices will be sent out shortly to the different neighborhoods regarding this event.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, noting that private and local funds were also identified in the Plan, including Attorney General Funds, which help to further the Federal funds. Chairperson Cobb asked if funds would be allocated to Bristol Place in Champaign, and Mr. Rejc agreed, that HOME funds would be included or attached to this project. Ms. Mierkowski noted that CDBG funds were leveraged for a Section 108 loan for this project as well. Mr. Rejc continued with the AAP discussion, regarding the benchmarks to be achieved. Chairperson Cobb asked specifically about the Rapid Rehousing program, and Mr. Rejc explained what the program entails and that the City does not have any programs that address this, but CCRPC does. Ms. Mierkowski noted through the Continuum of Care, Champaign County Regional Planning Commission (CCRPC), through the Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG), has a rapid rehousing program that specifically assists homeless families to obtain housing quickly, using the funds to assist them with deposit and rent.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, specifically with regard to housing and barriers to housing. Chairperson Cobb stated the document used to show the barriers, and Mr. Rejc stated that the question is answered further in the document. The next section showed the specific CDBG and HOME projects and programs that funding will be allocated to. Commissioner Bengston questioned the number of blanks that were noted in the document. Both Mr. Rejc and Ms. Mierkowski stated that the blanks are due to the questions not being applicable, but noted that before the document is sent to HUD, the

questions would be reviewed to ensure that all questions pertaining to the City would be answered. With regard to public comments and input, the City would keep trying to engage the community. Input was received from various agencies and entities in the community regarding needs in the community, and how projects and programs will work to address those issues. Ms. Mierkowski explained the AAP process and how the Annual Action Plan ties into the Consolidated Plan. Ms. Mierkowski also explained the reasons for black spaces in the Plan, in that the document had prepopulated sections, sections that may not apply, or were optional to complete.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan. Ms. Mierkowski noted that CDBG program has national objectives tied to it and that the City of Urbana uses their allocation to benefit low- and moderate-income households in the City; HOME funds are used towards affordable housing. The distribution of the funds was shown in the tables of the AAP, for both CDBG and HOME. Ms. Mierkowski noted that CDBG funds have to benefit at least 51% of the low and moderate-income households, particularly in the targeted areas of the City; the targeted median family income is 80% or below. Ms. Mierkowski also noted that the targeted numbers are estimates with regard to the numbers of persons or households served.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, with regard to the Housing Authority and their programs. Also noted is the homeless section, which information was obtained from the Continuum of Care, of which the City works closely with. Mr. Rejc noted that the Emergency Solutions Grant is not noted in the AAP, due to funds coming from the HUD to the State of Illinois. Chairperson Cobb asked about the State impasse and how it is affecting these programs. Mr. Rejc noted with regard to the ESG grant, funds come from HUD to the State of Illinois to the City, so the State and City has been able to access those funds in order to reimburse the shelters for their activities. Mr. Rejc noted that the City has been collaborating with the United Way and other agencies with regard to the Emergency Family Shelter.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, with regard to barriers to affordable housing, in that the U of I has driven housing costs higher than what they would normally be. Commissioner Bengtson noted an error in the wording of the question, and both Mr. Rejc and Ms. Mierkowski stated that the question was prepopulated and could not be changed or amended. Mr. Rejc also noted that the document could be formatted to make it more readable and accessible, as the document goes through its final review before submission to HUD.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, with regard to other actions that the City may not have programs for, such as lead based paint hazards. Commissioner Searing asked if the City works with the Public Health District and that only two children had been identified in the community, which is why funding might not be available. Ms. Mierkowski agreed and stated that the City applied to the State with the CUPHD for funding, which was not received due to lack of hazards being identified in the community, unlike other parts of the State including Chicago and other communities in the State. Ms. Mierkowski stated that the CUPHD could be contacted to ensure that this question was answered. Discussion followed with regard to the City's policy with regard to the presumption of lead for structures built prior to 1978.

Mr. Rejc continued through the Annual Action Plan, with regard to the discussion of program specific information involving the HOME program and the recapture/resale provisions. For example, if someone sold their home in the 3rd year, they would have to repay a portion of the assistance back to the City. The Final page of the document is a summary of the budget for both the CDBG and HOME grant programs.

A note of clarity, the document was submitted to the Committee of the Whole for review the previous night, and they did recommend approval of the Plan to the City Council. Ms. Mierkowski noted that the document was submitted to both the Community Development Commission and City Council in conjunction or together, due to the timing with regard to the submission of the Plan. No vote was taken the previous night, they had comments and questions as well, with the vote to be taken the following week.

Chairperson Cobb returned to the section of barriers to affordable housing and asked what other barriers there might be besides financial. Ms. Mierkowski pointed out other reasons listed in the Plan with regard to the barriers. Chairperson Cobb asked how they would be addressed and Mr. Rejc commented that the City will be doing an analysis to fair housing, Ms. Mierkowski commented that per HUD's new regulations, the analysis will begin sometime in 2017 or 2018, prior to the next Consolidated Plan. It will be more intense and more in depth, due to a court case in Texas involving fair housing and the disparity of housing, with concentrations of low income housing in various communities. Housing was deemed not fair in this case, so the Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing was revamped per HUD.

Ms. Mierkowski also noted ways in which the other barriers are being addressed, specifically through the Shelter Plus Care Program administered by CCRPC, for persons with certain disabilities, to help address housing. Various agencies that serve persons with specific disabilities receive vouchers for housing. Mr. Rejc stated that we will know more once we undertake this analysis. Commissioner Searing commented about a training with regard to fair housing that was held in Bloomington-Normal a few years back and Ms. Mierkowski stated that it was a precursor to this upcoming change in the regulations from HUD; also looking at the different protected classes and expanding those classes in the State. Commissioner Bengston questioned how the goals and objectives were determined. Mr. Rejc stated that they were determined by the Consolidated Plan process last year, with no changes.

Chairperson Cobb entertained a motion to either approve the Annual Action Plan, approve with suggested changes, or to not approve. Commissioner Silvis motioned for approval of the Annual Action Plan, Commissioner Moreland seconded the motion. Discussion regarding the suggested changes ensued, that they were more for clarification versus the substance. The motion carried.

Study Session: No items for this agenda.

Adjournment: Commissioner Searing announced her resignation due to moving closer to family. Seeing no further business, Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 8:07p.m.

Recorded by

Kelly H. Mierkowski
Manager, Grants Management Division

APPROVED