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## **Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**

**NH Community Development Finance Authority  
14 Dixon Avenue, Suite 102  
Concord, NH 03301**

Thursday, June 2, 2022  
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, *Chair*; Matt Walsh; Nancy Merrill; Carmen Lorentz; Ignatius MacLellan; and Anne Duncan Cooley.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE: Matt Sullivan (unable to attend in person due to travel constraints).

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Chris Monroe, *Community Development Manager*; Joshua Ahmad-Kahloon, *Community Development Manager*; Missy Lackey, *Contract Manager*; Melanie Steenbeke, *Contract and Loan Assistant*; and Maureen Quinn, *Board Manager*.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson opened the meeting at 2:00 PM. He called for announcements. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson noted no members of the public were in attendance.

### **A. Agenda**

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the meeting agenda. He called for questions or comments. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

#### **Motion – 2:01 PM**

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the agenda, as presented, and Mr. Walsh seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

### **B. Consent Agenda**

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson reviewed the Consent Agenda and called for questions or comments. None were offered. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for a motion.

#### **Motion – 2:11 PM**

Mr. Walsh moved to approve the consent agenda, as presented. Ms. Lorentz seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

### **C. Applications and Amendments**

Ms. Easterly Martey noted the Committee would be asked to review and consider one CDBG application and two amendment proposals. Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson asked for Committee members to state potential conflicts which require recusal(s).

- Ms. Merrill noted she is an employee of the City of Claremont; she will recuse from consideration and will not vote on the amendment submitted by the City of Claremont.
- Ms. Lorentz noted she is an employee of Laconia Area Community Land Trust dba Lakes Region Community Developers; she will recuse from consideration and will not vote on the amendment submitted by the Town of Meredith.

#### **D. Town of Whitefield – Library Planning Grant (CDBG – Public Facilities)**

Ms. Kaylor presented the application from the Town of Whitefield to the Committee. The Town of Whitefield is seeking \$25,000 to support the development of architectural and engineering plans necessary to lead to renovations of its historic library, intended to create additional and accessible space in the existing lower level of the library. Residents of Whitefield are the primary users of the facility, and 54.7% of the population qualifies as persons who are of low-to moderate income, making the project eligible for CDBG funding. The current librarian estimates about 50% of the library's functions fall within the definition of social services. These activities include assisting people with completing online job applications, printing tax forms, and connecting residents to resources and local social service agencies. The library provides access to computers, printers, copiers, and services – such as WiFi – to support access to information. Educational services, including homework assistance and bridge opportunities for learning during school breaks, are also deployed from the library.

Ms. Kaylor noted since the library building is historic, careful planning is required to understand the scope and costs of the project.

Ms. Kaylor stated the application is recommended for funding with the following staff recommended conditions:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated by HUD;
- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD and State regulations.

Ms. Kaylor noted the project scored 20 out of 25 points. The Committee asked whether the Town of Whitefield is eligible to apply for CDBG funding. Ms. Kaylor noted that library rehabilitation is an eligible activity, and since the town's area LMI threshold of 54.7%, the Town is eligible to apply for a CDBG implementation grant. The Town has indicated that they do intend to apply for implementation funding for the rehabilitation once planning work has been completed.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for further discussion, questions, or comments. None were offered.

#### **Motion – 2:25 PM**

Ms. Lorentz moved to approve the application from the Town of Whitefield for \$25,000 for architectural and engineering plans needed to renovate its historic library building, with all staff recommended conditions. Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

## **E. City of Claremont – Southwestern Community Services/Shelter Upgrades**

**Ms. Merrill noted she would recuse from consideration of this item due to a conflict.**

Mr. Monroe presented the contract amendment request from the City of Claremont on behalf of Southwestern Community Services/Shelter Upgrades. The City of Claremont has requested \$130,568 in supplemental funding to address projected cost increases directly due to the impact of COVID-19 and other economic factors on construction costs and availability of suitable contractors to complete the project. This funding comes from rollover CDBG-CV funds.

The Committee asked whether there is a maximum allowable amendment amount. Mr. Monroe noted if the gap funding amount is less than 20% of the original award amount, staff approval is sufficient. In instances where gap funding is equal to, or in excess of, 20% of the original project cost, approval from the Community Development Advisory Committee is required. Mr. Monroe also noted when larger funding requests are sought, staff evaluates the project and costs to ensure value engineering and other funds are sourced by the project to ensure a breadth of resources are sought beyond what CDFA can offer.

Ms. Kaylor noted for the Committee that NHHFA Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) funding is confirmed; the CDBG-CV funds fill a critical funding gap which will allow this project to move forward.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for further questions or comments. None were offered.

### **Motion – 2:13 PM**

Mr. MacLellan moved to approve the request from the City of Claremont on behalf of Southwestern Community Services/Shelter Upgrades for \$130,568 in supplemental funding, with no contingencies, as recommended by staff. Mr. Walsh seconded and the motion passed with five (5) yea votes and one recusal.

## **F. Town of Meredith – Laconia Area Community Land Trust/Harvey Heights**

**Ms. Lorentz noted she would recuse from consideration of this item due to a conflict.**

Mr. Monroe presented the contract amendment request from the Town of Meredith on behalf of Laconia Area Community Land Trust dba Lakes Region Community Developers. The Town of Meredith has requested \$232,000 in supplemental funding to address projected costs increases directly due to the impact of COVID-19 and other economic factors on construction costs. This funding is coming from rollover CDBG funds.

Mr. Gaetjens-Oleson called for questions or comments. None were offered.

### **Motion – 2:15 PM**

Ms. Merrill moved to approve the request from the Town of Meredith on behalf of Laconia Area Community Land Trust dba Lakes Region Community Developers for \$232,000 in supplemental funding, with no contingencies, as recommended by staff. Mr. Walsh seconded and the motion passed with five (5) yea votes and one recusal.

## **G. Discussion**

### **Point of Clarification – City of Laconia – Laconia Housing Authority/Partnership for Public Health**

Ms. Kaylor noted for the Committee she wanted to provide clarification for this public facility application for \$488,000; the application was approved at the April 7, 2022 CDAC meeting. Ms. Kaylor stated the Board of the Directors of the Partnership for Public Health does not allow the organization to be obligated for more than a five-year lease, as discussed at the April 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. This limitation means that the project will have a five-year benefit period instead of a ten-year benefit period as stated in the application. Ms. Kaylor acknowledged that this is a shorter benefit period than typically seen with CDBG applications, however 5 years does meet HUD requirements. This application was submitted in a non-competitive round and therefore this change does not impact the award decisions in the round.

### **CDBG-CV Update**

Ms. Kaylor updated the Committee on the CDBG-CV funding round. There is about \$2.3 million available in this funding round, and the threshold for amount has been increased to \$750K. She noted there is strong interest and there has been significant outreach and discussions to address eligibility, program focus, etc. It is anticipated that there likely be a minimum of at least six (6) applications; there will be some applications for HVAC and some from childcare providers. Some interested parties have sought guidance on how to partner with their towns or municipalities. Ms. Kaylor noted applicants may apply for both CDBG and CDBG-CV, but in these instances a strong case for COVID-19 impacts must be made. She noted the same application is to be used for both applications, making for a seamless and streamlined application system. All CV funds need to be expended by summer 2023.

### **Council on Housing Stability (CHS)**

Ms. Easterly Martey provided the Committee with an overview of the Council on Housing Stability, founded in 2020 to address the housing crisis in New Hampshire. She noted there is a diversity of voices, with 41 active members, and four working groups, tasked with developing ideas to address the housing challenge. Ms. Easterly Martey noted data underpins the strategies being considered. One example she cited is that wages have not kept pace with the increase in housing costs, and this has contributed to the problem becoming exacerbated. Since 2019, there has been a 21% increase in homelessness. Some of the goals established by CHS include:

- End veteran homelessness by 2022
- Reduce first time homelessness by 30%/1,000 households by 2024
- Increase the number of housing units by 13,500 by 2024

Ms. Easterly Martey discussed the strategies proposed to attain these goals, and they included, but are not limited to:

- Improve response, services, and policy – work to align and streamline the various services, providers, and resources
- Remove regulatory barriers to affordable housing

- Increase production of publicly financed affordable housing
- Promote private market housing production
- Improve legislative strategy which supports increased housing production
- Integrate, coordinate housing stability governance structure connecting State government with local communities through needs assessments, strategic initiatives, and data driven decision making.

Ms. Easterly Martey and the Committee discussed opportunities for alignment of CHS and CDFA funding. CDBG funding does seem to fit and four public facilities projects – with housing elements and impact - were highlighted as illustrations, and they were: Nashua Soup Kitchen and Shelter, Sullivan County TRAILS, Southwestern Community Services, Inc., and Headrest.

The Committee discussed housing rehab vs. new construction and the pros and cons of each type of housing as well as eligibility challenges. The Committee noted that affordability terms should be longer than five or ten years to ensure the intended benefit has greater impact. The Committee considered whether CDBG funds should be committed to larger projects and HOME funds would be targeted to smaller projects. The Committee suggested it would be important to still impact broad geographic areas and critical to invest in smaller projects in smaller communities, where the scope of a project would naturally be smaller.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted that CDFA's Tax Credit program could be deployed for equity funds to support housing. There could be opportunities to target transformative planning grants – with grants of up to \$100K – to geographic areas in need of housing.

Opportunity may also exist in alignment and partnership with organizations which provide supports to residents. It would be critical to ensure CDFA's scoring system matches this priority. As CDFA contemplates opportunities to invest in housing, the following areas of focus should be at the forefront of initiatives:

- Minimum affordability
- Missing middle
- Rehabilitation projects
- More investment in pre-development projects

The Committee agreed communities themselves can have a significant impact on affordable housing by embracing creativity and supportiveness. The Committee pointed to opportunities of selling blighted or neglected properties at low cost to allow for creation of affordable housing. The positive impact on the communities' tax base can be very significant.

Ms. Easterly Martey suggested CDFA could be having an idea competition – with small grants as awards – and perhaps housing ideas could be the theme. She suggested a design charette could be presented in partnership with the New Hampshire Municipal Association where a broad audience with representation from communities across the State would be in attendance. Ms. Easterly Martey said she would update the Committee regarding this idea.

### **Adjourn – 3:29 PM**

Ms. Merrill moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Lorentz seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



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Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager



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Benjamin Gaetjens-Oleson, Committee Chair