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Community Development Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Thursday, June 5, 2025
2:00 PM

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE PRESENT: Elizabeth Fox; Anne Duncan-Cooley; Joseph Doiron; Matthew Sullivan; Matthew Walsh; and Kelly Roy.

STAFF: Katherine Easterly Martey, *Executive Director*; Mollie Kaylor, *Director of Housing and Community Development*; Molly Donovan, *Director of Economic Development*; Scott Maslansky, *Director of Clean Energy Finance*; Melanie Steenbeke, *Contract Manager*; Julius Peel, *Community Development Program Administrator*; Felicity Winters, *Executive and Marketing Assistant*; and Maureen Quinn, *Tax Credit and Board Relations Manager*.

PUBLIC: Justin Slattery, *Belknap Economic Development Corporation*; Nancy Merrill, *CDFA Consultant*; and David Beurle, Heather Branigin, and Brittany Rempe, *Future IQ*.

Ms. Easterly Martey opened the meeting at 2:00 PM. She noted there were no announcements.

A. Agenda

Ms. Easterly Martey reviewed the meeting agenda and called for any changes; none were requested. She called for a motion.

Motion – 2:01 PM

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

Ms. Easterly Martey corrected her previous statement regarding announcements and noted the Committee will be asked at the conclusion of this meeting whether they wish to meet in July. The agenda reflects that a meeting will be held but if the Committee determines there are no items which necessitate a meeting, the meeting can be cancelled.

Ms. Easterly Martey also welcomed Mr. Justin Slattery of the Belknap Economic Development Council to the meeting.

B. Consent Agenda

Ms. Easterly Martey reviewed the Consent Agenda, which included the May 8, 2025, Community Development Advisory Committee minutes. She called for any questions or comments. None were offered. Ms. Easterly Martey called for a motion.

Motion – 2:03 PM

Mr. Walsh moved to approve the consent agenda and Ms. Duncan Cooley seconded. Ms. Fox noted she would abstain from the vote as she was not present at the May meeting.

The motion passed with three yeas. There was one abstention due to absence at the May 8, 2025, meeting.

C. CDBG Economic Development: New Hampshire Alliance of Regional Development Corporations

Ms. Duncan-Cooley and Mr. Walsh recused themselves from the review of the New Hampshire Alliance of Regional Development Corporations application. Ms. Duncan Cooley's organization would be a recipient of funding. Mr. Walsh serves on the Board of an organization which would also be a recipient of this funding.

Ms. Duncan Cooley and Mr. Walsh left the room at 2:04 PM.

Ms. Easterly Martey introduced CDFA's Director of Economic Development, Ms. Molly Donovan and stated she would present the New Hampshire Alliance of Regional Development Corporations (NHARDC) application to the Committee for their consideration.

Mr. Doiron arrived at 2:06 PM

Ms. Donovan provided an overview of the NHARDC program and their history of funding from CDFA through the CDBG Economic Development program. She noted this program is a vital resource for business technical assistance, which has both a demonstrated need, but also yields important impact and sustainability. Ms. Donovan stated CDBG funding does require job creation for each subrecipient to be eligible for funding. She noted this program complements the microenterprise funding which was approved in May 2025, as the technical assistance supports numerous small businesses.

Ms. Donovan noted the match funding in the Sources and Uses table should be \$269,000, rather than \$267,000. Ms. Roy noted the total funding listed in Sources and Uses table should be updated to \$538,000.

Mr. Sullivan arrived at 2:09 PM

Ms. Easterly Martey asked the Committee for questions or comments. The Committee asked whether this project was scored. It was noted that there are not other applications for this particular funding; no scoring is applied as the application is analyzed. Staff noted this funding targets small businesses. The Committee asked whether data can be derived to determine what businesses are being served by this funding; tracking could help identify where there may be greater need for this type of technical assistance.

Ms. Donovan noted this application is recommended for \$269,000 in funding with the following conditions:

- Sufficient funds are available and allocated to the State by the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) ;
- The project is able to secure all identified matching funds;

- All other usual and customary CDBG contract terms; and
- The use of funds conforms with HUD regulations and CDFA guidance.

Ms. Easterly Martey called for a motion.

Motion – 2:13 PM

Mr. Doiron moved to approve the application, as presented, with all staff recommended conditions. Ms. Roy seconded, and the motion passed with four (4) yea votes. There were two recusals.

Ms. Duncan Cooley and Mr. Walsh returned to the meeting at 2:14 PM

Staff and Committee briefly discussed technical assistance and municipalities. Oftentimes, the lack of capacity is reported to be a barrier for smaller communities to pursue funding sources through CDFA. Reaching communities and providing the support they may need to pursue and utilize supportive funding is challenging. It is a topic worth further consideration.

Ms. Merrill joined the meeting at 2:14 PM

D. Low-and-Moderate Income Solar Program

Ms. Easterly Martey introduced Mr. Maslansky and noted CDFA received additional applications for the Low-and-Moderate Income Solar Program. She asked whether any Committee members have conflicts with either of the applications. No conflicts were stated.

Mr. Maslansky stated the Low-and-moderate Income Solar Program is intended to serve low-and-moderate income populations. In May, two applicants were recommended for funding. Two applications are now also ready for the Committee's review and consideration.

NeighborWorks Southern New Hampshire – Apartments at Pearl and Orange - Solar – \$150,000

Mr. Maslansky presented the NeighborWorks Southern New Hampshire – Apartments at Pearl and Orange application requesting \$150,000 from the Low-and-Moderate Income Solar Grant Program to support a 160kW rooftop solar array as part of the construction of a 125-unit affordable housing development in Manchester. This will benefit 100% LMI housing units and the estimated \$31,680 in annual avoided electric costs will be used to provide free financial literacy programs and services to tenants.

Mr. Maslansky stated that staff recommends the application for funding with the following conditions:

- Board of Directors resolution or other approved documentation of commitment to the "Benefit" described in the application;
- Performance Security as described in the application or other approved Performance Security;
- Executed construction contract for solar;
- Completed utility interconnection agreement; and
- NWSNH must close on property and project financing prior to executing contract for award.

The Committee asked whether concern exists for any of the other construction funding which is part of the project's financing stack. It was acknowledged there may be increased uncertainty about the

security of funding sources. It was agreed that the following language be added as an additional condition for this award:

- Construction Finance Closing must occur within eighteen months of this award (November 2026); this award may be reconsidered or rescinded in the event the construction financing package is not finalized and completed by that date.

Ms. Easterly Martey called for any additional questions. None were offered. She called for a motion.

Motion – 2:23 PM

Mr. Walsh moved to approve the application as presented with both staff recommended conditions and the construction financing condition, as noted. Mr. Doiron seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Avesta Housing Development Corporation: Avesta River Turn II – \$76,639

Mr. Maslansky presented the Avesta Housing Development Corporation: Avesta River Turn II application requesting \$76,639 from the Low-and-moderate Income Solar Program to install a 65.1 kW PV solar array on the roof of the River Turn II property, a 40-unit Passive House, Multifamily, affordable housing property currently under development in Conway, NH. The array is projected to generate 77,862 kWh per year in electricity providing approximately 32.4% of the project building's electricity use. These saving will be invested into the property to keep up with needed improvements and maintenance.

Mr. Maslansky stated that the staff recommends the application for funding with the following conditions:

- Board of Directors resolution or other approved documentation of commitment to the "Benefit" described in the application;
- Performance Security as approved by CDFA staff;
- Executed construction contract;
- Completed utility interconnection agreements;
- Agreement to disclose electric usage data for 12 months following project completion; and
- Evidence of town approvals and permits, if applicable.

Ms. Easterly Martey called for questions or comments. The Committee and staff briefly discussed whether a construction financing contingency should be added to the conditions. It was determined this would not be necessary as construction financing for this project was more certain than the previous project. Ms. Easterly Martey called for a motion.

Motion – 2:29 PM

Ms. Fox moved to approve the grant application with staff recommended conditions, as presented and Ms. Roy seconded. The motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Ms. Easterly Martey noted for the Committee that the Board of Directors Manual authorizes CDFA's Executive Director to approve awards that are \$150,000 or less. She stated if there are additional applications for the Low-and-Moderate Income Solar funding which are at or below the \$150,000 threshold and need decisions prior to the next CDAC meeting, she will review those with the support

of staff and make a determination regarding funding. The Committee will be informed of any loans approved by Ms. Easterly Martey.

E. CDBG Consolidated Plan Schedule

Ms. Kaylor stated the 2026-2030 Consolidated Plan – which establishes funding priorities for HUD programs – is being developed and is due to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) by May of 2026. Ms. Kaylor noted CDFA is working on engaging with stakeholders and organizations likely to be impacted by CDBG funding to identify funding priorities which are both critical and beneficial to the State of New Hampshire.

Ms. Kaylor explained that work on the Consolidated Plan happens in coordination with New Hampshire Housing Finance Authority and the NH Department of Health and Human Services who also administer HUD funds. There are public meetings and hearings which are designed to solicit input from across the state. Additionally, CDFA is hosting additional structured meetings in order to receive feedback and better understand the needs and priorities from across the State.

There were no questions from the Committee. Ms. Kaylor added the Committee will be kept apprised of findings from stakeholder engagement activities, particularly if they point to significant updates and/or changes to the CDBG portion of the Consolidated Plan.

F. CDBG Municipal Outreach and Engagement Findings

Ms. Donovan welcomed Ms. Nancy Merrill to the meeting. Ms. Donovan noted that CDFA wants to have broader reach and connection with communities throughout the State, and to that end, CDFA is thinking about 'place' and not simply singular investments. CDFA seeks to understand both barriers and opportunities within the CDBG program to foster broader engagement. Ms. Donovan shared that Ms. Merrill has spent several months traveling the state conducting interviews; she invited Ms. Merrill to share some of her findings.

Mr. Slattery left the meeting at 2:42 PM

Ms. Merrill thanked Ms. Donovan and CDFA staff for the opportunity to pursue this initiative. Some of the key findings are as follows:

- Beneficiary requirements are hard for small towns to meet
- Place based development is not well defined; it is not consistent from place to place
- Small communities do not have the staff for this type of work; some smaller towns that have used CDBG funding rely on their Regional Planning Commissions
- Most towns are familiar with CDBG but do not know of CDFA
- Community Spaces are lacking in many towns but are critical
- Most small towns do not use planning grants; some are not aware of planning grant and others lack the capacity to utilize this resource
- More applications seem to come from regions where there is a strong Regional Planning Commission; Southwest Community Services and Strafford RPCs are two examples of an RPC being adept and helping small towns develop and facilitate good applications

The Committee briefly discussed whether CDFA could offer training for RPCs to help them better serve the towns and communities with which they work. Ms. Donovan noted a report based on learnings will be developed and the Committee will be kept apprised of these updates.

Ms. Merrill left the meeting at 2:57 PM

G. CDBG Program Year 2026 Training Plan

Ms. Easterly Martey introduced Mr. Peel to the Committee and noted he has been developing a Grant Administrator Training program and initiative. Mr. Peel provided highlights of this initiative, including the following:

- Efforts are underway to improve ease of use of CDFA's GMS platform
- Realizing the last Grant Administrator Training was in 2019 and the number of Grant Administrators continue to diminish, CDFA is seeking to:
 - Offer entry-level seminars
 - Engage attendees to better understand where challenges exist
- Areas of focus include (with the goal to create more compliant applicants and grantees):
 - Compliance Plan During Application Process
 - How to manage claims
 - Environmental Reviews/Procurement/Acquisition
 - Status Reports

The Committee thanked Mr. Peel for his work. The Committee asked how many grant administrators (GA) CDFA has at this time. Mr. Peel noted there are two (2) private GAs and two Regional Planning Commissions which have numerous GAs. There are likely ten (10) active GAs in total across Housing/Public Facilities and the Microenterprise Program. The overall mailing list to engage people was closer to twenty (20). Updates on this initiative will be provided, particularly since GAs can be excellent resources to reach a broader range of communities.

H. CDBG Materials Update

Ms. Kaylor addressed the Committee and noted that CDBG materials – including the Application and Program and Implementation Guides – are being updated. CDFA followed a RFP process to solicit bids on this project, and a company named Future IQ was selected to undertake this project on behalf of CDFA. Ms. Kaylor noted the initial start up was a bit slower than anticipated, but the current progress has been significant, and the Application and Program and Implementation Guides may be ready by July 1, 2025. Of note, the content of these materials will not be significantly different, but it is anticipated that layout, ease of use, and accessibility will be markedly improved. Stakeholder engagement is helping to define what new CDBG materials are needed and what updates to current materials will be most beneficial.

Ms. Kaylor introduced Mr. David Beurle, Heather Branigin, and Brittany Rempe of Future IQ. Mr. Beurle shared the phased CDBG Program Materials Update and Development Process with the Committee. The plan has been structured as follows:

- Phase 1 Initial Planning and Project Set-Up
- Phase 2 Program Materials Updates
- Phase 3 New Material Development

- Phase 4 Final Strategy

Mr. Beurle noted Future IQ is in Phase 2 of the project. Work will continue in collaboration with CDFA staff guidance and with input sought from stakeholders.

Mr. Beurle, Ms. Branigin, and Ms. Remp left the meeting at 3:25 PM

I. Executive Director Updates

Ms. Easterly Martey noted CDFA does not currently expect significant changes to the CDBG funding. Program Year 2025, which begins on July 1, 2025 is funded so funding rounds will not change for the time being. Ms. Easterly Martey noted there are additional funds from rollovers (projects which were not able to move forward as planned) so there are ample CDBG funds available.

The Committee confirmed cancellation of the July 2025 meeting. The next scheduled meeting will be on August 7, 2025.

Ms. Easterly Martey called for any additional questions. None were offered.

A. Adjourn – 3:33 PM

Mr. Doiron moved to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Roy seconded and the motion carried by a unanimous vote of the Committee.

Respectfully submitted,



Maureen Quinn, Board Relations Manager



Katherine Easterly Martey, Acting Committee Chair