



City of Madison

City of Madison
Madison, WI 53703
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Meeting Minutes - Approved COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT COMMISSION

Monday, July 7, 2008

5:00 PM

215 Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
Room 300 (Madison Municipal Building)

CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL

Present: 6 -

Thuy Pham-Remmele; Monya A. Choudhury; Steven C. Bartlett; Carl G. Silverman; Justin O. Markofski and Charlie R. Sanders

Absent: 1 -

Arthur V. Robinson

Excused: 3 -

Tim Bruer; Marsha A. Rummel and Lina Trivedi

Staff Present: Mary Charnitz, Nancy Dungan, Pam Rood, Audrey Short, Sue Wallinger, Anne Kenny

Charlie Sanders called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.

WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

Sanders relayed a message from Alder Bruer who said he will not be able to attend this summer's Commission meetings due to expanded duties required by his leadership role on the Common Council and BOE. Bruer expressed his support for the Commission in their decisions about the 2009-2010 funding. Sanders then reviewed items on the regular July portion of tonight's agenda, in addition to the presentations by applicants of their proposals for 2009-2010 funds. Following each presentation, Commissioners may ask questions of agency representatives about their proposals.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Silverman, seconded by Markofski, to Approve the Minutes. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Several people registered to speak about Staff Report Item C, the Southwest Planning Process - Hammersley Garden Project. Tom McKenna, President of the Orchard Ridge Community Club (ORCC), Inc., handed out a letter in support of the Hammersley Garden and said the ORCC accepts the

part of the Southwest Plan regarding community gardens and is in favor of the action proposed for Hammersley Garden.

Nancy Priegel, member of the Greentree Neighborhood Association (GTNA) Board, reiterated the comments she sent the Commission in an email on July 2. She said the GTNA would like to see upgrades to the park and for the Parks Department to remove the overgrowth of brush and invasive plants in the space.

Larry Sperling, also a member of the GTNA Board, said that he and other board members are very interested in making Hammersley Park friendlier. He said that the park is primarily used as a shortcut route now. He said the GTNA Board would like brush removed, as well as better lighting installed so that elementary age school kids are more likely to use Falk Elementary School play equipment and basketball court. Currently, the space is not very inviting for children. He supports efforts to make the park friendlier to adults and children. He would also like to survey the neighborhood for input on how to make the park better. He said gardens are a fine issue, but as a Board, GTNA would not take on management of the garden. He emailed the Commission July 2 with additional comments supporting the gardens.

Margaret Liss, who had also sent her comment to the Commission via email, presented large maps and aerial photos of the Hammersley Park area. She said that people within a one-mile radius of the park favored the garden plots proposed for the park. The garden could serve people who are in economic poverty. She said data show that 65.9% of Falk Elementary School students were LMI, and roughly 14% of families within a one-mile radius of the park utilized Section 8 vouchers. She said that a real possibility exists for Hammersley Park to serve as a teaching lab, while also serving lower income households and bringing the community together.

Lisa Subeck, member of the Southwest Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee, said that one of the concerns about Hammersley Park is that it is not being used currently in safe ways. The Steering Committee wanted to create more safety in the park through design improvements, which would help to create stability in the neighborhood. She also said that gardens present opportunities for individuals and families to grow their own food. She said she is seeing more people leave than stay in the neighborhood due to safety issues.

Larry Luther, President of the Meadowood Neighborhood Association and member of the Southwest Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee, said he speaks in favor of the putting a garden at Hammersley Park. He said currently the park is an attractive nuisance that has only one bench, one light, and an overgrowth of bush. He said he has spoken with many people who seemed enthusiastic about the garden. He also said that there shouldn't be much erosion at the park in the proposed garden area, which was formerly a skating rink. He said that teachers at Falk Elementary School

are interested in starting a garden for students. He offered to head the gardens project at Hammersley. He said he would like to see the \$20,000 used to improve Hammersley Park and add a garden. He emailed the Commission on July 2 with additional comments supporting the gardens.

Joe Mathers of Community Action Coalition (CAC) said that CAC would participate in helping residents with the Hammersley garden.

Others who mailed or emailed their comments to the Commission supporting a community garden at Hammersley Park include Karen Deaton, Paula Harris, and Bonnie Mitchell; Lisa Veldron, President-Elect of the Meadowood Neighborhood Association; Christie Howell-Yrios, Executive Director of Animal Crackers, Inc.; and Lynn Winn, Principal of Falk Elementary School.

REQUEST FOR FUNDS OR MAJOR CHANGES IN CURRENTLY FUNDED PROJECTS

11129

Authorizing the extension of use of currently allocated funds to Movin' Out Inc. for the provision of Rental Housing from December 31, 2008 to September 30, 2009.

Mandeville explained the opportunity that MOI has to leverage their HOME rental housing funds from the CDBG Office to apply for more than \$1 million in HUD 811 program funds. The HUD 811 funds would be used in conjunction with their HOME rental funds to purchase nine rental units in Madison. MOI is seeking the extension for use of their HOME funds because they would not be able to acquire the properties until Summer 2009 based on timeline for the application and use of 811 funds. HUD 811 funds would provide a continuing site-based rent subsidy that would allow tenants to pay no more than 30% of their income for rent.

Discussion highlights:

- The September 2009 deadline for spending the funds was set so that the funds would be spent as quickly as possible.

Silverman moved to accept staff recommendations to approve an extension of the deadline for use of \$280,000 in HOME funds for rental housing to MOI from December 31, 2008, to September 30, 2009. Choudhury seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to pass the motion.

A motion was made by Silverman, seconded by Choudhury, to Return to Lead with the Recommendation for Approval to the BOARD OF ESTIMATES. The motion passed by voice vote/other.

STAFF REPORTS

- (b) Update on Allied Neighborhood and Others: Accepting an Employment

Report, "Strengthening Employment Opportunities in Allied Drive"

The Commission received a report called "Employment Opportunities in Allied Drive" from a subcommittee of the Allied Task Force. The subcommittee held a series of meetings late in 2007 focused on problem identification, review of existing resources, identification of a model employment system, and development of recommendations to strengthen and enhance employment efforts in the Allied area.

Discussion highlights:

- Choudhury noted that this is the third report the Commission has received from the Allied Task Force since she has been a member and that she is tired of receiving reports on studies that don't provide new information.
- Charnitz said that this report was done by a subcommittee of the Task Force on employment in Allied Drive. She said the Task Force would like CDBG to review and approve it. CDBG can ask to set parameters on future studies. If the Commission would prefer not to approve the report, they can act only to note they have received the report.

Markofski moved to note that the CDBG Commission has received the report. Choudhury seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Further Allied update:

Charnitz said that the CDA is looking at Phase II (homeownership) of its Allied redevelopment and considering issuing an RFP. She is not sure that CDBG will be included in the RFP process. Staff has reviewed the draft RFP and housing market study and would like to get involved with drafting the homeownership RFP. Demolition of the current structures is scheduled for next week for all but two buildings. The current residents will be moved to other housing.

(c) Update and Action on Southwest Planning Process - Hammersley Park Project

Charnitz explained that currently there is \$20,000 approved for improvements at Hammersly Park that include brush clearing, lighting, and path improvements. Parks staff indicated they did not want to move forward with the expenditure unless the Park had a focal point or a point of destination that would increase usage and make the improvements worthwhile.

Charnitz, Dungan & Widstram (Parks) met with representatives from the neighborhood to discuss this issue, after significant discussion, the neighborhood asked for a garden component to the project.

Silverman moved to approve a community garden in the Hammersley Park improvements project. Markofski seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

e) Notice of Potential Conflict of Interest

Operation Fresh Start (OFS) has notified us of their intent to seek new bidders for construction and acquisition loans for their property development. Their Board has determined that it is in the best interest of OFS to expand the pool of financial institutions with which they do business. OFS has asked us to determine if it would be a conflict of interest for them to add Park Bank Middleton, a bank at which Connie Ferris Bailey's, OFS's Executive Director, sister is the branch manager. We have discussed this matter with Patrick Fjerstad, our HUD representative in Milwaukee, who has indicated he does not feel this will constitute a conflict under the HUD definitions. His rationale is that Ms. Bailey's sister receives no real or direct financial benefit from being able to bid on the loans, and in fact if they are the low bidder it will be OFS and the subsequent homebuyer who will benefit from the savings on the properties. He did suggest that we ask OFS to inform the Commission of the bidding process and to make the discussions about the potential conflicts public as a means of assuring compliance with the spirit of the regulations, although no regulation is actually being affected.

OTHER REPORTS

Gardens Committee (Choudhury):

The Committee had no quorum at its last meeting. It will meet again in September.

Martin Luther King (MLK) Humanitarian Award Committee (Trivedi):

Trivedi was absent.

Emerging Neighborhood Funds Committee (Pham-Remmele):

Contracts are being signed, and money is being spent.

Community Development Authority (Bruer):

Bruer was absent.

SPECIAL ITEMS: PRESENTATION BY APPLICANT AGENCIES OF PROPOSALS TO ADDRESS THE OBJECTIVE OF ACCESS AND HOMELESS

The Community Development Block Grant Commission will hear from applicants for 2009-2010 CDBG, HOME, ESG, and City funds. Each agency has been requested to briefly describe the major goals, participants, and benefits of their project.

6:00 [11020](#)

YWCA, Second Chance (M1)

Lisa Subeck, Second Chance Coordinator

Subeck said that the Second Chance Tenant and Financial Education Program is a two-part six-hour workshop for homeless and near homeless individuals. The program covers how to be a good tenant, budgeting, credit, and landlord-tenant laws. Graduates of the program are eligible for follow-up case management. YWCA also has some eviction prevention money.

The SKILLS program is a similar, though longer and more intensive, program targeted to at-risk high school students.

Discussion highlights:

- YWCA chose a six-month follow-up period because it was a realistic mark to measure success. They would rather use money on serving clients than on doing more extensive follow-up surveying. The number of clients would keep growing, and the tracking would become too difficult and labor-intensive.
- Pham-Remmele said that as a funder, she would like to see statistics.

Wallinger said that in the past, the CDBG Commission has had a separate contract with an outside researcher who did the research.

6:15 [11021](#)

The Salvation Army, Warming Shelter (M2)

Barbara Lindsey, Director of Human Services, and Kristin Schill, Housing Coordinator

Lindsey said that the Warming Shelter is a newer program by The Salvation Army for those who are turned away from other shelters. It is critical in the winter months, though ironically, there is more demand for it in the summer months. Last year, The Salvation Army started keeping the Warming Shelter open year-round. Currently, they are using hallways and meeting rooms for space and providing clients with shower and laundry facilities and food. Clients are served on a first-come first-served basis. The Salvation Army does not restrict the number of days clients may stay at the Warming Shelter or access to its resources.

Discussion highlights:

- Schill said that they have just started doing case management from the Warming Shelter this year.
- The Warming Shelter receives both City and County funds.
- Clientele can't be at the Warming Shelter during the day. Some clients go to Interfaith Hospitality Network.
- The Salvation Army doesn't require clients to show birth certificates, Social Security cards, or other identification. They help clients with medical care, daycare, and school registration.
- All case management is entered into the Service Point database.

The Commission recessed for a dinner break at 6:30 and reconvened at 6:45.

6:45 [11022](#)

Tenant Resource Center, Inc., Housing Mediation Services (M3)

Megin McDonell, Program Director

McDonell said that the program is described well in the application. She said the primary issue for TRC is the request for an increase in funds. The request for more funds reflects the increases in the costs of running the program and an increased need of their services. TRC has dramatically increased its fundraising efforts, but staff is stretched thin due to funding losses. They also lost funds for other parts of their housing counseling program, including their toll free number and campus outreach.

Discussion highlights:

- TRC housing counselors receive calls from tenants renting houses that are being foreclosed, but those types of calls haven't yet impacted the Mediation program much.
- TRC has three very long-time volunteers who answer their phone lines.
- Almost all clients who use this program rent from private landlords or CDA. Very few tenants of non-profit providers call for Mediation Services.
- TRC lost funding from two sources. They lost about \$14,000 in HUD funding for their toll free number. Additionally, TRC lost about \$50,000 in funds from the Student Finances Committee, who determined that TRC is ineligible for their funding because they are not run by students.
- People in poverty have a difficult time keeping their housing because they can't afford it, so TRC has had some repeat clients.
- Most evictions result from non-payment of rent rather than from police calls or crimes committed.

Most evictions result from non-payment of rent rather than from police calls or crimes committed.

7:00 [11023](#)

Tellurian UCAN, Inc., ReachOut (M4)

Michael Fleenor, ReachOut Worker

Fleenor said that Tellurian employees three outreach workers to go into the streets to look for homeless people in need of their services. Federal PATH funds provide 90% of their funding. HUD's criteria define the population that can be assisted with PATH funds. Individuals must be single adults who have been homeless for one or more years or chronically homeless, which means at least four episodes of homelessness a year. Individuals must also have a serious mental disorder or substance abuse problems. Typically they are people with little or no income or they receive SSI. The outcome objective of the program is to get homeless people from the streets into

housing. The program also provides support services to help individuals maintain housing. Most of their clientele would be turned down for standard rental programs, and some have been evicted. Last year, ReachOut served 120 unduplicated individuals, all of who were less than 30% of AMI. They provided follow-up for six months. ReachOut used CDBG funds to assist with security deposits. CDBG funds allowed ReachOut to move 26 individuals from the streets into housing. They had anticipated being able to help only 15, but they were actually able to assist more people at approximately \$481 per person.

Discussion highlights:

- Tellurian's ReachOut program is not in partnership with Briarpatch at this time.

7:15 [11024](#)

Project Home Prairie Crossing Resident Services, (M5)

Jan Reek, Director of Programs

Reek said that PH operates a 48-unit complex on Allied Drive. They purchased and rehabbed the property in 2000 and developed high quality, affordable housing for low-income households. PH is committed to staying in the neighborhood. Reek said that the Resident Services Coordinator (RSC) is essential to managing the property. Residents can get to know and trust the RSC. The RSC provides information to residents, coordinates the Prairie Crossing garden program, organizes parties that strengthen the community, and works with families at risk of eviction due to behavior issues. The requested \$12,800 would cover only a portion of the cost for the RSC to work 20 hours a week. Reek said the current vacancy rate at Prairie Crossing is 35%, but PH only rents to qualified tenants. They hope that with redevelopment of Allied a greater choice of tenants will be drawn to the area.

Discussion highlights:

- Rent for a two-bedroom apartment is \$595 per month and includes heat.

7:30 [11025](#)

Porchlight, Inc., SRO Support Services (M6)

Steve Schooler, Executive Director

Schooler handed out copies of Porchlight's annual report and gave Commissioners an overview of Porchlight. He said Porchlight is a broad faceted agency that seeks to help homeless individuals with barriers find permanent housing. They provide one approach for all their programs, from entry-level to permanent housing. Porchlight operates 230 units in 21 different buildings, their biggest being their Brooks Street facility with 102 units. Porchlight owns their properties and acts as property manager for them all. They leverage HUD funding for subsidized units. Their new venture, Porchlight Kitchen, sells rhubarb jam at a number of different retail locations and sells potato salad at the Old Fashioned Restaurant.

SRO Program - 306 North Brooks Street

Schooler said that most clients of the SRO Program have serious mental illness or drug issues. Porchlight provides credit counseling to their clients. Schooler said that 75% of their residents retain housing for one year. Schooler said that the increase in funding of \$5,600, which they are seeking across all programs, should be thought of as a COLA.

Discussion highlights:

- Porchlight's outcomes are evidence that clients are retaining housing.
- Clients who leave the Brooks Street facility do so because they have found other housing, such as public housing that has opened up.

7:45 [11026](#)

Porchlight, Inc., SRO Housing, (M7)

The After Hours program provides additional services beyond the traditional 8-to-5 workday. It provides evening and weekend hours and security.

8:00 [11027](#)

Porchlight, Inc., Housing Operation (M8)

Housing Operations helps pay for case managers at properties other than the Brooks Street facility. The program assists clients with medical appointments, Social Security issues, and other needs. Porchlight's goal with Housing Operations is to have clients retain their housing, whether it be transitional or permanent housing. Porchlight tracks those who move out for up to one year.

Discussion highlights:

- Tracking people for more than one year would be difficult and would require another staff person.
- Depending on the program, 60-70% of transitional housing clients either stay in transitional housing or move on to permanent housing.

8:15 [11028](#)

Porchlight, Inc., Hospitality House (M9)

Housing Operations helps pay for case managers at properties other than the Brooks Street facility. The program assists clients with medical appointments, Social Security issues, and other needs. Porchlight's goal with Housing Operations is to have clients retain their housing, whether it be transitional or permanent housing. Porchlight tracks those who move out for up to one year.

Discussion highlights:

- Tracking people for more than one year would be difficult and would require another staff person.
- Depending on the program, 60-70% of transitional housing clients either stay in transitional housing or move on to permanent housing.

8:30 [11029](#)

Metropolitan Milwaukee Fair Housing Council, Fair Housing Center of Greater Madison (M10)

Nick Novak, Associate Director

Novak said that the FHC is seeking funds to perform the same services as they have done with their 2008 contract. They enforce fair housing laws, provide education about fair housing laws, and perform complaint intake and testing. Novak said that housing discrimination is usually very subtle. FHC has a pool of volunteer testers trained by the agency to perform testing. If discrimination is suspected after FHC performs their test, clients can then file complaints with EOC, HUD, etc.

8:45 [11030](#)

Independent Living, Inc., Home Share (M11)

Rita Giovannoni, CEO

Giovannoni said that Home Share has been funded by CDBG for several years. Home Share is both a housing-based and service-based program in which older adult homeowners share their homes with homeseekers who provide a service role, such as taking care of the trash, the yard, and other maintenance, in lieu of rent. The program helps older adults stay in their housing longer and helps younger persons to obtain housing without extra costs.

ILI has expanded the search for older adult homeowners who may need more extensive assistance than just help with the house and yard work. They are looking for older individuals who are more frail and need more personal care, such as help with bathing, etc. The program with this added component of personal care is called Home Share Plus. ILI has seen an increased demand in personal care among older homeowners, as well as an increased demand for housing among younger individuals willing to provide extra services. Because of these increases, ILI has requested more funds for this cycle.

Discussion highlights:

- ILI screens clients thoroughly for the program. They do criminal background checks, and they ask about reasons for placement, time available for commitment to house/yard work, personal habits, behaviors, etc.
- Program funds go toward staff costs, performing background checks, and home inspections. ILI is always monitoring matches for problems.
- Homeseekers contract with homeowners and ILI and can be removed very easily if the match does not work out.
- ILI does most of its outreach for this program through senior service agencies.

9:00 [11031](#)

Freedom, Inc., Homeless Leadership (M12)

Cynthia Lin; Coordinator of the Homeless Leadership Program

Lin said the Homeless Leadership program originated with issues at Brittingham Park. The goals of the program are (1) to create a system of accountability and alternatives to police involvement, and (2) to help homeless single men with mental health/drug abuse problems. Freedom, Inc.'s proposal includes two parts: (1) classes for skills, such as communication skills, which are currently taught by volunteers, and (2) mentorship program in which each member is paired with a buddy to work with. Lin said that \$10,000 would fund office space and space for congregation, in addition to allowing Freedom, Inc. to hire a coordinator.

9:15 [11032](#)

Domestic Abuse Intervention Services, Housing Related Aid (M13)

Shannon Barry, Executive Director

Barry said that DAIS is the only domestic violence shelter for Dane County. She also said that one-third of arrests in Dane County are related to domestic abuse/violence. Statistics show that of the six homicides in Dane County last year, five were domestic related. Last year, the shelter served 181 women and children for 115 nights of shelter. They have a wait list of additional women/families needing help. Abuse is most likely to occur when victims leave their abusers. DAIS has intensive screening needs. DAIS will put victims up in hotels if need be, and they also shelter male victims of domestic abuse. They currently have three case managers. CDBG Office funds go directly to client services. None of the funds DAIS receives from CDBG goes to operating costs.

Discussion highlights:

- DAIS started to discuss expansion of their shelter last week. They hope to expand within five to 10 years.
- DAIS may be moving to a public location.
- Women are seven times more likely to be killed when they are trying to leave their abusers.
- When DAIS must put victims up in hotels, the cost usually runs \$100/night.
- DAIS also provides food vouchers and gas.

Sometimes DAIS will refer clients to YWCA or other appropriate shelters.

9:30 [11033](#)

Community Action Coalition, Financial Services (M14)

Nichelle Nichols, Director of Development and Community Relations, and Anna Lightbourne, Manager of Family Development

CAC's Financial Services program provides services to assist impoverished households, along with information and referral related to housing, food, and

clothing. In 2007, CAC gave 387 households financial assistance. Funds are used for two purposes: (1) for direct financial requests for housing assistance/cost of housing, and (2) for case management, financial services, and staffing for intake.

CAC has two outcome objectives for the Financial Services program: (1) to increase knowledge about income management, and (2) to increase client's ability to secure and maintain housing. They measure their outcomes with a survey.

Lightbourne said that in 2007, 82% of those households assisted with security deposits retained their housing after six months. Of those households provided rental assistance to prevent eviction, 72% retained their housing after six months. Funding assistance is random. CAC conducts a drawing similar to the lottery twice a month.

Discussion highlights:

- CAC can't guarantee that households in their lottery system will be selected for assistance. Their pot of money serves local Dane County residents, with 96% of them in Madison.

ADJOURNMENT

Silverman moved to adjourn, and Markofski seconded. The Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 8:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Kenny, recorder.