

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT**

**COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY, MARCH 20, 2012**

**6:00 PM**

ATTENDANCE: Council members: Martinez; Co-chair, Brantley; Co-Chair, Lyons, Colon, M. McCarthy, Curwen

NON-COMMITTEE: Council member: Olson

**AGENDA**

Co-chair Brantley called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm. She introduced the committee members.

Approval of Committee Minutes of February 22, 2012.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**54-11** Grant Submission re State of Connecticut DECD Regional Brownfield Development Grant to be used for Brownfield Geographical Information System.

Ms. McGoldrick stated that this grant was from State of Connecticut DECD Regional Brownfield Development Grant. She said they were already awarded the funds in the amount of \$275k to develop the Brownfield Geographic Information System. She explained that it's a GIS layer to integrate with the brownfields in the city. There is no city match required.

Council member Colon asked if this was something new or if it's been done before. Ms. McGoldrick said it was new to the city.

Mr. Lavernoich added that this pertained to a demo project to inventory all brownfields in the city based on special status. He said he thought it would be beneficial to flag all the brownfields status and feedback from the Department of Environmental Protection and the Environmental Protection Agency on the GIS system. He stated that the application was put together by Ms. McGoldrick's office and they surprisingly received the grant. He clarified that it's not really an economic project that is ready to go yet; it's more of an item to identify every property in the city with special status and then flag it on the GIS system. He said the state liked the idea and it's never been done before. They are just looking to give it a go and it will be done in conjunction with the Greater Bridgeport Regional Council. They will hire a consultant to conduct file searches based on varied information and documents related to the Department of Environmental Protection that is filed in the office.

Council member Curwen said he thought it was a great idea, noting that he has been a supporter of the project. He asked how they will identify which properties have asbestos, etc. Mr. Lavernoich said only the properties that are already on file with deregulatory agencies will be looked at.

Council member Curwen stated that when the information is compiled, he requested that a copy be submitted to the committee. Mr. Lavernoich said he wasn't sure what form the information would come in. He said proposals will be solicited from different firms and they will then advise what format the data will be.

Council member McCarthy asked how this will help potential property owners. Mr. Lavernoich said when the city gets into a condemnation; they can look at the GIS before demolition is done. They will be able to see the property on file and direct people to put together the demolition specifications. It can also be used for eminent domain properties, potential owners will be able to find out if the property is in special status.

Council member Lyons commented that the report would be helpful for future use. She commented that it will be especially helpful when the council visits the city of Boston to learn about brownfields – *she asked when the information is obtained to submit the document to the committee as a reference tool when they go before state representatives.*

Co-chair Brantley asked about contaminated properties and how the process will help businesses coming in to develop. She asked if they will be able to benefit from the grant funds. Mr. Lavernoch said there were many tools and programs for that purpose and to address certain sites with contaminants. He suggested that she direct persons with interest in the matter to his office.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*Consent calendar**

**55-11** Grant Submission re State of Connecticut DECD Regional Brownfield Development Grant to be used for environmental and site work at 148 and 220 Waterview Avenue.

Ms. McGoldrick stated this grant was in the amount of \$450k. It will be used for environmental remediation at 148 and 220 Waterview Avenue where the new Yacht Club will be relocated. There is no city match required. She noted that the item pertained to the agreement with the city.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*Consent calendar**

**57-11** Grant Submission re 2012 United States Conference of Mayors DollarWi\$e Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick stated this grant was for the 2012 United States Conference of Mayors DollarWi\$e Grant Program. She stated an exciting opportunity was found and they applied for it under the DollarWi\$e Grant Program related to financial literacy. She noted that Bridgeport, Boston and Milwaukee, WI received funds to support the program. They will open up (300) seats for the Housatonic program and the grant pays for transportation. The participants will chose a potential career and they will engage in other aspects of the program. She further noted that they will partner with schools to integrate the program into the curriculum. They received \$15k and \$9k of that will take

care of the spring session. And in the fall, \$3k will go into the Board of Education curriculum component.

Council member Lyons commented that it was a good program to get youth excited about attending college and it will also serve as a good tool to get middle school kids excited about entering high school.

Ms. McGoldrick noted that the program was in response to helping parents become more informed about the financial aspects of applying for college loans. There is no city match required.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY MOVED TO APPROVE  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*Consent calendar**

**58-11** Grant Submission: re 2012 United States Soccer Foundation Annual Sports Lighting Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick stated they were awarded \$50k for a sports lighting program for one of the soccer fields in the city. She said the site hasn't been identified yet, but it will be determined based on the best fit. There is no city match required.

Council member Lyons questioned the language contained in a document that outlined that a city match was required. Ms. McGoldrick said she thought the match mentioned pertained to equipment only; it wasn't related to lighting.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO AMEND THE DOCUMENT TO  
EXCLUDE THE FOLLOWING WORDING: MATCH:\$145,000 (FROM CAPITAL,  
LOCIP, CDBG, PRIVATE DONATION/FUNDRAISING)  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

\*Council member Lyons emphasized that she trusted the finances would be used in the matter they are intended for.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE THE DOCUMENT AS  
AMENDED  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*Consent calendar**

**59-11** Grant Submission: re State Department of Social Services Block Grant Extension for a six month period of April 2012 – September 2012.

Ms. McGoldrick stated this grant was an extension for the duration October 2011 through March 2011. She explained that the state grants the extension at six-month increments; so this grant will run from April 2012 through September 2012. The amount of the grant is \$90,092.00 total and the funds will go towards staffing for case management; approximately \$17k-\$18k will go to two sub-contractors and the balance will go to salaries.

Council member Lyons made a request that in the future the committee should be given a breakdown of the funds and where they are specifically allocated. Ms. McGoldrick acknowledged the request.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**\*Consent calendar**

## **ADDENDUM**

**27-11** Grant Submission: re: DEEP Community Gardens Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick gave an update that this grant was in the amount of \$46,312. She recalled that the item was presented at the last meeting and it was tabled to iron out some issues. It was stated during that meeting that the new president chair would be present to talk about the work they are doing. Ted Graybarz stated that Barbara Kelly, the President of the Bridgeport Community Land Trust was present to answer questions.

Ms. Kelly stated she was the President of the Bridgeport Community Land Trust. She mentioned that they had a turnover in governance and they recently identified an additional five new community members that are all Bridgeport residents. She said they adopted a plan for 2012-2013 to establish garden leadership and they will have uniform guidelines for leadership and to establish sustainability measures for the gardens. They will also be identified by a uniform so everyone is aware that they are workers and part of B.C.L.T. She added that they plan to implement fundraising efforts and new ideas will be a shared effort.

Council member Lyons asked if she had a list of the exact locations of the gardens. Ms. Kelley noted the locations of the gardens as follows:

- 416 Barnum Avenue
- 331 Clinton Avenue
- 1134 State Street
- 284 Hough Avenue

She noted these were in addition to the ten (10) gardens that are already being managed.

Attorney Trachtenburg stated that the city records had different addresses and there are actually four (4) community gardens. She clarified that there are (2) parcels at 414 and 418 Barnum Avenue; not 416 Barnum Avenue. The address for the Hough Avenue garden is 282 Hough Avenue; not 284 Hough Avenue.

Council member Curwen asked Ms. Kelley if she could provide the committee a copy of the by-laws. Ms. Kelley said yes.

Council member Curwen asked for details about the grant money in the amount of \$46k; he wanted to know if the amount would be to cover one year. Ms. Kelly said she understood that they had a 10-year agreement. Attorney Trachtenburg clarified that they will have 5-years to complete the project to maintain and upgrade the gardens.

Council member Curwen emphasized that he didn't have anything against the community gardens, however; he said it's been his argument in the past that it's a poor city and they're taking land and locking it into a five or ten year lease. He said he didn't feel they were looking at the potential to develop the properties and add to the tax base. He added that although the endeavor is commendable, his major priority would be to grow the tax base, rather than cultivate gardens. He said he didn't support a long term lease, noting that perhaps a one-year or two-year lease without a lock in agreement would be better.

Mr. Graybarz responded that he was working with Attorney Liskov to only add the community garden properties that aren't buildable and they have plans to continue that. He explained that these parcels have had checkered histories in the past and the city is trying to make it right by seeing that the gardens are developed and maintained properly. He said there is also the point of trying to resolve the matter by taking the

gardens and developing them so that they could possibly be sold in the future and put back on the tax role.

Council member Curwen asked if they were obligated to the five-year term leases and if not, will they be able to market them. Mr. Graybarz said there were no fixed terms; he thought the property might revert back to the city if a problem was found. Attorney Trachtenburg clarified that they were stuck with the resolution that the city council approved, which will be locked in for five years. She stated there are properties that Attorney Liskov is weeding out, although they may be found to be unbuildable, he strongly encourages the adjacent homeowner to purchase the lot.

Council member Martinez commented that she would like to see the community more involved with the gardens. She noted that they are good as a means of providing product to families. She also suggested that B.C.L.T. teach the residents how to maintain the gardens that they may have on their home.

Co-chair Brantley expressed that there is a community garden on her street. She recalled that at one time there was a political sign posted on it that was much to her dissatisfaction. Ms. Kelley clarified that B.C.L.T. is not politically affiliated with any party and they don't intend to be in the future.

Co-chair Brantley made a request that all gardens be maintained to eliminate garbage being strewn around and in them.

Ms. Kelley relayed that she's learning as she goes along as the new president. She apologized for the past problems with the gardens and she expressed that she will do everything she can to maintain them.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER COLON MOVED TO APPROVE**

Council member Lyons commented that she understood Council member Curwen's concern. However, she said she has found that many adjacent property owners don't always want the vacant property due to the fact that it's not always in the best condition and may not be buildable.

Mr. Graybarz reiterated that the properties used for the gardens often aren't buildable.

Ms. Kelley stated that the \$46k will be mostly spent up front for the build up of the gardens.

Council member Blunt asked the co-chair to recap details of the grant. He asked if the grant included the hiring of community people to maintain them. Ms. McGoldrick replied no, she said they are maintained by volunteers. Council member Blunt commented that the community garden in his area at times hires local youth to maintain it.

Council member Colon asked who pays for the water bill to cultivate and maintain the gardens. Mr. Graybarz said there are some gardens that the city provides the water for. The city currently incurs the bill, but they are looking to minimize the city's obligation. He thought that water taps would be eventually funded through the B.C.L.T. to maintain the gardens. They may also supply rain barrels. Ms. Kelley clarified that rain barrels don't actually contain the rain, they need to be hooked up to a system.

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS MOVED TO APPROVE**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER McCARTHY SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED WITH FOUR VOTES IN FAVOR AND ONE VOTE IN  
OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN)**

**\*Not on consent calendar**

## **ADJOURNMENT**

**\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ADJOURN  
\*\* COUNCIL MEMBER COLON SECONDED  
\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting adjourned at 7:15 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham  
Telesco Secretarial Services