

**CITY of BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
of the CITY COUNCIL
PUBLIC HEARING
CONSOLIDATED PLAN for HOUSING and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
FY10 CDBG REPROGRAMMING**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 2010

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

6:00 P.M.

ATTENDANCE: Council members: dePara, Co-chair; Curwen, A. Ayala, Brantley, Martinez

STAFF: Kelly McDermott, Acting Senior Manager, Central Grants
Alanna Kabel, Deputy Chief Administrative Officer/
Housing & Community Development

Co-chair dePara called the public hearing to order at 6:20 p.m.

He introduced the committee members, and noted that Council members: Brannelly and T. McCarthy weren't on the committee, but would be present to ask questions.

He reviewed the guidelines that each person would have three minutes to speak. He stated that each person should stay within that time limit out of courtesy to the other petitioners. He thanked everyone for coming out tonight.

15-09 Community Development Block Grant Program Re-proposed Amendment to the City of Bridgeport Consolidated Plan for Housing and Community Development (2008-2013)

The following re-programming applications were presented:

Also to follow are the comments and questions asked by the committee members and the responses from the petitioners:

Application ID#	Total Funding Request	Citizen's Union Recommendation
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1. GBAPP	\$35,000	
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Trina Barnes stated she was requesting support for the Housing for Success program. The amount requested will be used to renovate the front doors and install a handicap ramp. The program is a transitional home for teenage girl; some that are moms and some that aren't. They have a building permit and they are ready to go. She noted the project should be completed by June 30, 2010.

Council member Ayala asked if they had an estimate or a firm cost.

Response *the entire renovation will cost \$51,000; they were asking for \$35,000.*

Council member Brantley asked where the program was located.

Response *148 Mill Hill Avenue.*

2. CoB OPED	\$115,000	
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Angie Staltaro stated she was there as a representative from the NRZ office. She noted she was there with representatives of the other NRZ's, from the west side, east side, east end and south end. This is a proposal to jump start major and short term projects in the neighborhoods. Outside groups will come in to begin initiating the projects; such as at the Black Rock garden. They will have volunteers help with the enhancements and improvements. Each neighborhood has indicated which project will be done, driven by the community.

3. CoB OPED	\$460,000	
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Tom Coble stated that he was glad to be before the committee to ask for assistance in eliminating blight in neighborhoods. He displayed the top-20 list of properties that need to be demolished. He stated the request was for \$460,000, noting that the average cost of each demolition would range between \$25k-\$45k. He further noted that if they could receive the funds to do at least three or four of the ten (10) buildings, this will help

leverage other dollars. The project will be geared towards low to moderate incomes. He emphasized that the funds would allow the beginning of the much needed demolitions.

Council member Martinez asked who owned the houses that were displayed in the photos.

Response *one of the houses is located on Pembroke Street and owned by a lady in a nursing home. Another house is owned by a developer.*

When the buildings are knocked down, will a lien be placed on the property and will it go through foreclosure.

Response *yes and the the money acquired will be put back into additional demolitions.*

Council member Ayala questioned if a private developer owned the properties and if the committee decides to give them the money for the demolitions, will the city then be in control of the properties.

Response *they will foreclose on the property and the demolition will be paid by the developer. In addition, OPED, Housing Dept. and Planning will collaborate on the outcome of what will be developed in the future.*

Commented that there was a concern that the city will be responsible, instead of the developer.

Response *there will be stipulations incorporated to assure proper outcomes.*

Council member Curwen asked if there was a list of properties submitted with the application.

Response *Ms. McDermott acknowledged that there was a listing on file.*

5. Blessed Sacrament \$57,500

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

6. CoB OPED \$500,000

It noted that this item pertained to Business Development.

Tom Coble said that this item was for economic development with Don Eversley and Ed Lavernoch. The project will provide low interest loans to start-up and perspective businesses. The applicants have to be lending approval ready. He commented that a

PILOT might be the way to go to measure the success of the program. The program will assist downtown businesses in a proactive approach.

7. Marrionville, LEDSCO \$849,000

Angie Moza stated that she has lived all her life at this co-op. She stressed that the building was in dire need of many repairs; such as window and gutters. She explained that when it rains, water leaks into the homes that causes damage and mold. There are fifteen seniors and adults with kids that live there and the current conditions are dangerous, such as the pot holes.

Madeline Mojica another resident of the co-op said she purchased her unit last December, but she has been unable to move in due to the leaks and damage in the kitchen. She emphasized that it is a continuous situation.

Council member dePara asked if others that lived there were experiencing the same problems. There was an acknowledgment from approximately twenty-five (25) present that they were having the same issues.

Council member Brantley asked if the co-op residents paid their mortgage to a development corporation.

Response *the co-op is managed by a real estate firm.*

How was the property sold when it was in disrepair; were any inspections done.

Response *there weren't any inspections.*

Maria another resident said the property was managed by a real estate broker. The residents own the units and pay common charges. She repeated that water leaks into the walls that result in cracks.

Are these problems the responsibility of the co-op manager?

Response *no, they created a board to address the problems.*

Has anyone petitioned the real estate company to make the repairs?

Response *the occupants are responsible for the interior repairs. They were asking for funds to fix the exterior repairs.*

Has this petition ever come before the committee before to request funding?

Response no.

Comment that the residents should go back to the corporation and demand that they take some responsibility and do something for the co-op.

8. Hollow Com Dev/Hollow NRZ \$150,000

It was stated that this program has been around since 1990. They are active in the community and take on various projects. They were there looking for assistance to do some street scape landscaping that will help beautify the area.

Angie Staltaro displayed some illustrations of the street scape showing North Avenue and Madison Avenue. She noted that there haven't been any improvements in a long time. They were looking to beautify the area, since it is a gateway to the city.

Dominick commented that he felt the area surrounding the gateway was in disrepair. The lights don't work and the sidewalks are in disrepair. He said it was important to improve these conditions since it's the first visual seen when people visit the city.

Tanya Lewis said she was in support of the project that will be a follow up to phase I that have already been completed in the Hollow as a leverage project. They are continuing with the NRZ plan and they will use the funding to act as leverage for profit and non-profit organizations in the community.

11. Bpt Fire Dept. \$81,250

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

12. East End NRZ/East End CC \$93,000

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

13. Bpt Comm Land Trust \$155,000

Robert Halsted stated there were various groups present representing this item. The people present introduced themselves to the committee. They requested funds for the community garden programs. It was noted that they enlisted community groups to help with the materials and technical assistance. They had letters of support and plot plans where the gardens are proposed.

James, the senior class advisor from Housatonic Community College spoke about the seniors that were interested in helping plant the community gardens. It was felt that this gives them a sense of something to look forward to.

Christina who is involved with the farm stands had pictures of the farm stand that is situated in two locations; one on Columbia Street in the south end and at the Health Department on East Main Street. She expressed that there has been success in growing fresh food where it is then sold to local residents.

Robert Halsted noted that they also conducted job training.

14. ABCD \$100,000

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

15. CoB OPED/Barnum Shelton \$50,000

Paul Barnes stated that they were looking to help youth and seniors with this project. It's a small grant to buy paint and supplies that these groups are unable to buy themselves. He expressed that it makes a difference when improvements are made. They will put youth to work and pay them a small stipend. He thought this was important to help keep them out of trouble.

Angie Staltaro added that they've had thirteen partners come in to help renovate buildings in the area. They need paint and materials to make the repairs.

Jasmin Richards said she was in support of the proposal to renovate and keep the area up, so that Bridgeport becomes a more enticing city.

16. Bpt Neigh Trust BNT \$200,000

Mike spoke as the representative for the the west end NRZ. He stated that they were requesting \$200k and noted that it's a matching grant. The funds will be used for people to fix up their houses, where they otherwise couldn't afford it. He noted that the area was a roadway to the city, so the improvements would be an enhancement and encourage new homeowners.

Jasmin Richards said that she was the secretary for the west end NRZ. And a resident of the Stratfield Historic District. She was in support of the project and she felt the area could become a model neighborhood on the west side of town, with the proposed improvements.

Tom Coble stated that the west end had historical history and properties. They were requesting the funds to make improvements that will allow the area to go from an at risk area to a main stream neighborhood.

Council member Ayala asked who would match the fund.

Response *the homeowner will match the amount granted.*

Council member Brantley asked if the people seeking the funds still lived in the home and if they will continue to reside there.

Response *it will probably be part of the criteria going forward.*

17. McGivney CC \$45,000

It was stated that this program serves (362) girls after school. They hold events, such as a weekly health clinic. The request is to fund the replacement of windows that are in disrepair.

Angie Staltaro commented that whenever anyone needs space, McGivney Center opens up their doors for use. It's a well maintained building and a crucial service to the area.

Council member Curwen commented that he was familiar with McGivney. He stated that with the current federal administration's emphasis on energy grants, he questioned whether or not replacement of the windows should fall into that category.

Response an energy grant request has been submitted and they are waiting to hear back.

18. Ralphola Taylor CC \$46,858

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

19. Bpt Comm Land Trust \$8,000

John Williams stated they have been involved with the community gardens for four years. He spoke about the bicycle path proposal and the passion for the sport. He noted that they received approval for the land and farm initiatives. He said they were trying to keep an open mind in regard to the project. He added that since the skate park has opened, there haven't been any repairs to the ramps, so they are just trying to keep doing what they do.

Council member dePara commented that the committee would follow up on the skate park issue.

Council member Brantley asked where they were looking to do the project.

Response they are considering Beardsley Park. It's a big enough area for riding and for children as well.

20. FSW, Inc CT \$122,100

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

22. OPED Multi Proj NRZ \$250,000

Tom Coble stated this item incorporated three different projects. They were asking for funding for five projects. The infrastructure design was already set and the plans have been drafted for three separate neighborhoods:

- Madison Avenue/North Avenue \$48,000 is needed to clean up the area.

- Waterfront access proposal will help to take this project a step forward. They plan on enhancing the area with upgrades that will drive the initiative for access to the waterfront.
- Barnum Avenue/Knowlton Street \$42k is needed to enhance these areas.
- Fountain on State Street – they have private entities who want to help develop this project.
- Revere Street – has four properties in bad condition, they are looking to do some replacements on the back street.

Council member Brantley asked which fountain they were talking about.

Response the fountain is located off of the State Street extension. It was noted they are also looking to repair the fountain on Park Avenue.

24. CGCD BEDCO \$25,000

Ms. Kabel stated the request was for \$25k to acquire a lot at 90 Holly Street from BEDCO. It will be renovated and it's the temporary site for Re-entry Outreach Ministries. The future plan is to sell it as affordable housing. They need the funding to acquire the lot at the city's assessed value.

27. CoB Public Facilities \$610,000

The petition was called for the representative to come forward. The representative wasn't present. Item passed.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MADE A MOTION TO CLOSE THE PUBLIC HEARING**

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED**

**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

**Co-chair dePara stated that the final funding decisions will be made at a later date.*

ADJOURNMENT

The public hearing ended at 7:32 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services