

**CITY of BRIDGEPORT
ECONOMIC and COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT and ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
of the CITY COUNCIL**

MONDAY, NOVEMBER 15, 2010

Wheeler Room B

6:00 PM

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

NON-COMMITTEE: Council member Brannelly

STAFF: A. McGoldrick, A. Kabel, E. Lavernoich

Co-chair dePara called the meeting to order at 6:05 pm.

Approval of Committee Minutes of October 25, 2010 (Special Meeting).

**** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ MOVED TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES
** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA SECONDED
** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

157-09 Grant Submission: re: U. S. EPA 2010 Greenscaper Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick stated that this grant was offered by the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection Greenscaper Grant Program to hire a greenscaper intern on a part time basis. They will assist in the design and implementation for storm water management projects and they will work with businesses and homeowners and they will assist with the greenscaper training program. It involves an EPA program to train an

individual to do those types of projects for different jobs around the city. The person will assist the director and program under the Mayor's Initiative Program. The amount awarded is \$10,000.00 and there is a \$10,000.00 match requirement that will be provided by the Parks Department. She noted that the amount was already awarded.

Ms. McGoldrick explained that they received the contract quickly, so they need to obtain approval in a fast track manner.

Co-chair dePara stated that because the amount was already granted, the item will be referred off the floor during tonight's city council meeting.

Council member Martinez asked which department the program was under. Ms. McGoldrick said the program would run under the Public Facilities Parks Division.

Ms. Kabel added that the Policy of Office and Management reviews the match request and the funds are identified in the Parks Department's budget.

Council member Ayala asked if this was a first time position being created. Ms. McGoldrick said yes.

Council member Ayala asked for more details about the program. Ms. McGoldrick explained that the program was under the Mayor's Initiative 20/20 Green Program to hire an intern for storm water management projects and to assist with improving bio-swells. The intern will assist with downspouts, green barrels etc. and they will also find opportunities for those who graduated from the GreenScape Program. As an intern graduates, the new hire will help them get a job and they will assist with the projects. The job will be on a contractual basis for approximately four hours per day.

Council member Ayala asked if the new position was a requirement. Ms. McGoldrick said they were notified of the description and they are looking for the intern to do that type of work.

Council member Lyons asked about the grants that have already been approved. She had a concern about these types of requests coming forward to the council for approval, because she felt that they should be aware of them ahead of time, so that they have the

information before the request is made. She also questioned how the \$10k match will affect the budget. She further questioned if they already have a person working on Green Initiative projects. Ms. McGoldrick said the person currently employed is working under the Conservation Corp for youth that go door to door and inform the public. The new hire will actually know how to do the work and they will explain to the homeowners how to conduct the work and they will reach out to businesses as well to educate them how to be more efficient in storm water management.

Council member Lyons repeated that the last minutes requests don't allow enough time to look into the budget. She said she had a fear that they may come up short if they have too many of these types of requests. She further noted her concern how it will affect the budget overall.

Ms. Kabel responded that with regard to the submission, the request is then submitted to the city council. In this case, there was a quick turnaround to obtain approval. Council member Lyons interjected to say that she understood that, but these types of requests come up often. Ms. Kabel replied that before staff can apply for a grant, they have to ascertain that the match is available. Council member Lyons suggested that when these requests come up, it should be run by the budget committee prior to seeking approval. Ms. Kabel said there is actually a form that staff has to fill out, but it can't be signed off on until Tom Sherwood signs off on the match, so they always try to assure that the match is there.

Council member Curwen asked if they identified the line item the money will be coming from. Council member dePara replied no. Council member Curwen said when they take one item from one line item and move it to another, it results in a request. He said he agreed with Council member Lyons concerns based on the importance of doing due diligence during the budget process. He stressed that the only way to find out if a match is truly available, they need to do the research. Ms. Kabel said they would try to get the information.

Council member Martinez commented that they need to know exactly where the \$10k is coming from. She added that to take it from something that really may be needed wasn't a good practice. She asked for a better explanation next time a request comes forward.

Council member Ayala commented that he will vote on the item tonight, but he had a concern that these types of requests might affect someone else's job.

Council member Lyons asked where they were getting the intern from. Ms. Kabel said they will put out an RFP for someone who specializes in the area. They may look to the University of Connecticut or other state schools for a candidate. Again, it's a contractual position and when the contract runs out, the hope is that the program will be up and running and sustained.

Council member Lyons asked what the bottom line benefit was to the community. Ms. McGoldrick said they see it as implementing many projects to make sure that they're meeting all the green standards identified in the plan. Also, many of the projects will provide efficiency measures for storm water management in various areas; not to mention the environmental benefits and hopefully, it will result in new employment prospects in the field.

Co-chair Curwen asked if this was a time sensitive request. Ms. Kabel said yes, per EPA reaching out to them and indicating they were willing to fund it. They were contacted last week and that's the reason for the quick turnaround for the request.

Co-chair Curwen commented that he understood the category of time sensitive requests.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER AYALA MOVED TO APPROVE
** COUNCIL MEMBER MARTINEZ SECONDED
** MOTION FAILED WITH TWO VOTES IN FAVOR (AYALA, MARTINEZ) AND
THREE VOTES IN OPPOSITION (COUNCIL MEMBERS: CURWEN, LYONS
and BRANTLEY)**

158-09 Grant Submission: re: U.S. EPA 2010 Brownsfield Assessment Grant Program.

Ms. McGoldrick stated that this was another grant that was submitted within the last couple of weeks to fund and assess brownfields citywide. The grant is for \$400k and \$200k will go towards properties with petroleum and hazardous materials on site.

Mr. Lavernoich said they received the grant two or three times in the past that was greatly effective. He explained that the city has come into ownership for brownfield properties and some will be cleaned up for reuse, however, they don't have the ability to budget for all of them. He said they have had success with these types of properties, such as abandoned factories there were contaminated. And with that knowledge, they were able to seek other grants, but without approval; many of the brownfield programs will stagnate. Currently, they have evaluated two to three sites to spend the grant on and in the meantime, they are strategically trying to determine the site for evaluation. There is no city match required.

Council member Brantley asked about the two sites they were looking at. Mr. Lavernoich said they were looking at the old Bridgeport Brass site and the Health Department site located on the corner of East Main Street. He clarified that the the site location is at 560 N. Washington Avenue, which is the old Bridgeport Brass site. The other one is located on Waterview Avenue where it is a vacant site.

Mr. Lavernoich noted that none of the properties pose an immediate health or safety risk, so this is not a time sensitive request.

Council member Ayala asked if the request was only for testing the brownfields and not for cleaning them up. Mr. Lavernoich said that was correct. He said they can't start cleaning them up until testing is done through phase-I. Phase-II is where they actually start poking holes for ground water or well samples and then there is phase-III that quantifies the conditions to move onto the planning stage and remedial action plan. He noted that the money can be used for all the phases.

Council member Brannelly asked about the costs involved and if it was based on the use of the land or other conditions. Mr. Lavernoich said they could do the phase-I assessment on any property and how they spend the money after that is dictated by the EPA; this depends on what's involved considering hazardous waste or petroleum issues. He said there's no formal evaluative process to determine where best to start a project and complete it.

Council member Lyons asked about the project period of the 3-year grant and if the projects were set in stone. Mr. Lavernoich said they weren't set in stone, they are just projects they considered right now. He noted that if they don't start a new assessment even though they have the funds, if they aren't used, the money may be returned to close out the grant. He further noted that this won't affect future grants received because it's looked upon as a good thing if excess money is returned. The key thing is to show tangible results for a project.

Council member Brannelly asked if this was for an application not yet awarded. Mr. Lavernoich said that was correct. He noted that the competition was fierce for the grant.

Co-chair Curwen commented that although it was difficult to vote on an item at the last minute, he saw the grant come through before and he agreed it was necessary to clean up the brownfields.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER BRANTLEY SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

159-09 Grant Submission: re: U.S. EPA 2010 Brownsfield Clean Up Grant Program for 837 Seaview Avenue.

Ms. McGoldrick stated this request was for the actual cleanup of the brownfields. The grant is site specific for 837 Seaview Avenue known as the Seaview Plaza. It will be for petroleum and hazardous waste clean up. The site is owned by the Bridgeport Port Authority, but the city is the applicant. There is a \$40k match that goes to the developer who will develop the site and the Bpt. Port Authority will work with the developer. Mr. Lavernoich added that it is the old Carpenter Tech steel mill site, where there are 40-acres on the water side of Seaveiw Avenue and property to the right of 14-acres. The developer is proposing 150,000 sq. ft. of retail and all told, it will be a \$30 million project. He said that \$25 million of that will be to construct buildings, but there are extraordinary costs of \$5 million. There are also costs for contamination, footings and home security issues related to the shipyards, per the concern about it being a target

area for terrorists. He noted that they will come forward in the future seeking approval for the development.

Co-chair Curwen asked if the \$200k for the brownfields had been identified. Mr. Lavernoich said all the problems associated were assessed during the 1990's and they obtained approval by the state DEP, so the remedial action plan is in place. They also identified multiple sources of funding where they will use a portion of the tax revenue to identify the problems on site. In addition, there is \$2.5 million of costs for contamination, but the match won't be a problem.

Co-chair dePara asked if the \$40k will be paid by the property owner. Ms. McGoldrick clarified that they can get it from the developer, the TIF bonds or the Bpt. Port Authority; it can come from four or five sources.

Council member Lyons commented that helping the brownfields helps the city. And it also products money for the city. She added that since it wasn't coming directly from the budget, she was in favor of it. Overall, she felt it was a win win situation.

Mr. Lavernoich mentioned that there was a standing offer if they wanted to learn more about the brownfields to let him know. He said this was open to everyone on the city council. Co-chair dePara noted that they may hold an informational session in the future. Mr. Lavernoich said he could do a powerpoint presentation.

**** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO APPROVE**
**** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**
**** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

ADJOURNMENT

- ** COUNCIL MEMBER CURWEN MOVED TO ADJOURN**
- ** COUNCIL MEMBER LYONS SECONDED**
- ** MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

The meeting was adjourned at 6:55 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Diane Graham
Telesco Secretarial Services