

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough
CDBG/Citizens' Advisory Committee
May 7, 2019**

The State College Borough Community Development Block Grant/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CDBG/CAC) meeting was called to order by Selden Smith, Chair, on Tuesday, May 7, 2019 at 12:05 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street.

Members Present

Selden Smith, Chair; Rebecca Misangyi, Vice-Chair; Marcia Patterson; and Bruce Quigley

Members Absent

Alexis Burke, David Gaines, and Jason Olcese

Others Present

Maureen H. Safko, Senior Planner; Elizabeth S. Eirmann, Planner-Housing Specialist; Denise L. Rhoads, Administrative Assistant; Morgan Wasikonis, Housing Transitions, Inc. (HTI); Colleen Ritter, State College Community Land Trust (SCCLT); Amy Rumbel, Centre Safe (CS); Faith Ryan, Centre County Office of Adult Services (CCOAS); Christine Bishop, Youth Service Bureau (YSB); and Stephanie Fost, Habitat for Humanity

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Mr. Quigley to approve the April 2, 2019 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Mr. Smith, Chair, thanked the Committee for approving the East Fairmount Park support letter he drafted.

Public Hearing on Housing and Community Development Needs and Proposed Strategies for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Ms. Safko reviewed several fundamental guidelines pertaining to the Community Development Block Grant Program for those present for the public hearing to consider as they prepared their comments. She stated that any activity completed needs to benefit low-moderate income persons and at least 51% of an area of benefit needs to meet low-moderate income guidelines.

She noted that because HUD presumes that the following classes meet low and moderate-income guidelines: 1) elderly, 2) victims of domestic violence, 3) homeless, and 4) disabled, activities primarily for the benefit of one of these groups can be completed without other documentation of low- and moderate-income benefit.

Ms. Safko outlined a list of CDBG eligible activities including: 1) acquiring/selling property purchased with CDBG funds; 2) public facilities such as sewer, water, library, community and senior centers, health clinics, and homeless/domestic violence shelters; 3) code enforcement under limited conditions which the Borough did not meet; 4) demolition/rehabilitation of buildings; 5) removal of architectural barriers, limited to existing barriers; 6) public services - limited to 15% of the grant allocation; 7) economic development; 8) housing services - energy audits; 9) assistance for higher education; 10) micro-enterprise – discouraged by state and federal CDBG regulators.

She presented a map showing the Census tracts within the Borough where at least 51% of the population have incomes that meet low- and moderate-income guidelines.

Ms. Safko stated staff was required, annually, to distribute a Fair Housing notice in the local newspaper along with voluntarily providing it to banks and realtors.

For Minority Business Enterprises/Women's Business Enterprises (MBE/WBE) the Borough was required to affirmatively market federally funded opportunities to MBE/WBE businesses by sending bid notifications to them.

CDBG does not require matching funds. The HOME program does. However the State College Borough has been exempted from providing HOME match for a number of years.

Proposed use of funds for the Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) for the coming years included:

- 2019 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds would assist with Streetlight/Curb Ramp Replacements along the 100 blocks of Sowers and Hetzel and on Foster between Allen and Pugh. The budget is \$250,000 from FY 2019, plus approximately \$60,000 remaining from the completed FY 2018 Streetlight/Curb Ramp McAllister/Locust/Heister Project.
- 2020 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds would assist the East Fairmount Park project with \$92,000 leaving \$158,000 for another activity to be identified through the public participation process currently underway.
- 2021 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds (\$95,000) would assist Public Works with removal of existing architectural barriers for accessibility in local parks. They would also provide assistance of \$75,000 for streetlights and curb ramps on Garner Street. Assistance would also be provided (\$80,000) for street reconstruction on Burrowes Street between West College and West Beaver Avenues.
- 2022 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds would assist with streetlights and curb ramps on Pugh Street between Beaver and Nittany Avenues.
- 2023 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds would assist with construction of shared use bicycle and pedestrian pathway connections to link residents of income eligible census tracts with parks, schools and employment opportunities.
- 2024 total of CDBG funded CIP Projects: CDBG funds would assist with streetscapes in the West End neighborhood.

Ms. Safko presented a map of projects that had been completed and those that would be completed in the coming years.

Public Hour Input

Ms. Wasikonis stated staff was happy with the CDBG funding each year. She noted the funding helped with overnight staffing. The impact of being able to use leftover CDBG funds to purchase the Logan Avenue duplex as a rental was of significance. It would provide much needed affordable rental housing to the community.

Ms. Rumbel noted CDBG funds helped their shelter run 24/7 which, in turn, helped make the building safer. She thanked the Committee for helping to make this possible.

Ms. Ryan stated the majority of funds they received was from CDBG funding which helped fund bridge housing and helped to extend the term of housing availability. Mr. Quigley asked what system they had in place. Ms. Ryan stated it was called the Rental Assistance Program (RAP) along with a case management program called the Pennsylvania Housing Affordability and Rehabilitation Enhancement fund (PHARE). Mr. Quigley stated they could increase coordination with the Housing Authority of Centre County (HACC). Ms. Ryan stated she had been in contact with both Centre and Clinton Counties HACC offices. She spoke of the need for additional 811 housing for the disabled.

Ms. Bishop noted that CDBG funding helped the Youth Service Bureau's teen shelter and the Independent Living programs; and that her organization really appreciated the help.

Ms. Fost noted the cost of purchasing land for Habitat for Humanity was very high and they had to maintain affordability for their homeowners. She noted she was at this meeting to learn. She stated Habitat for Humanity had no homeowners in the Borough which would be a goal for their organization. Ms. Safko stated a model that worked well for a Habitat for Humanity organization she had worked with was taking a home that was foreclosed, and either rehabilitate or demolish it leaving the land available for construction of a new Habitat home. She noted staff could work together with Habitat for Humanity toward this goal.

Substantial Amendment to FY 2019 Consolidated Plan

Ms. Safko's overview stated that the proposed substantial amendment would:

- revise the FY 2019 CDBG and HOME estimated allocations that were previously approved by Council in November of 2018 with the actual grant amounts communicated to the Borough by HUD in April of 2019,
- reprogram a balance of \$60,004.66 in prior year funding remaining from the completed FY 2018 Infrastructure Project (Streetlight/Curb Ramp McAllister/Locust/Heister) to the FY 2019 Infrastructure Project (Streetlight/Curb Ramp Sowers/Hetzel/Foster) and
- Amend the goal of the FY 2019 Infrastructure Project to reflect the updated Low- and Moderate-Income Summary Data received from HUD in 2019.

Ms. Safko noted the actions would have only positive impacts on future grants.

A motion to recommend to Council for approval the proposed amendment to the FY 2019 Consolidated Annual Action Plan, pending consideration of comments received during the 30-day public comment period, and staff recommendations, was made by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Ms. Misangyi. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Ms. Ritter discussed using newly requested PHARE funding to make energy saving retrofit lessons learned from the new GreenBuild to help reduce utility costs for current Land Trust homeowners. SCCLT had applied for PHARE funding for assistance.

Ms. Wasikonis noted that newly requested PHARE funding would be used to make energy saving retrofits at the Logan Avenue property and at the Kemmerer Road Apartments.

CAC's comments included:

- Ms. Misangyi asked how the GreenBuild energy savings were working. Ms. Ritter stated that one of the houses average electric bill was \$15/ month. The heating, cooling and water heating are all electric.
- Mr. Quigley asked why SCCLT had not heard yet about the allocation of the PHARE funding. Mr. Quigley stated he thought the allocations were already announced. Ms. Ritter stated she had read on the agency's website that announcements would be made in July.

Ms. Safko reminded the Committee of the Community Needs meeting that evening at 7 p.m. The meeting would be moved from Council Chambers to Room 201. Mr. Smith stated he would be glad to represent this Committee and encouraged other members to attend.

Ms. Safko shared with the Committee a list all of the organizations from which the Borough solicited comments for the public hearing.

Mr. Quigley reminded the Committee he had promised to speak about the housing rehabilitation program operated by the Union County Housing Authority. Ms. Safko asked if he would be available for the June meeting and offered to add this item to the June agenda for discussion.

Upcoming Meeting

Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at Noon

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 12:56 p.m. by Ms. Patterson.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise L. Rhoads
Administrative Assistant