

**MEETING SUMMARY OF THE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (CDC)
MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING
TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2012 – 6:30 P.M.
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS – DULUTH CITY HALL**

Present: Debra Branley, Daniel Nyquist, Bill Kimbler, Michael Ramsey, Daryl Yankee, Patricia Tyler, John Evans, Barbara Carr, Justin Perpich, and Kristi Gordon.

Absent: Jim Gaylord

Staff: Keith Hamre, Char McLennan, Karen Olesen, Suzanne Kelley, and Ben VanTassel.

Others Present: Steve Sarri

Roll Call: Chair Kimbler called the meeting to order, and conducted roll call.

1. Public Hearing – Substantial Amendment to FY 2011 and FY 2012 Annual Action Plans

Hamre provided a brief explanation of the need to amend the Action Plans to allow for the awarding of additional Emergency Solutions Grant (ESG) Program funds that have been allocated to the City of Duluth. The 2011 amount is \$70,012, and the 2012 amount is \$97,913. The intent is to issue a request for proposals early this Summer, in partnership with St. Louis County. The Public Comment period will end on May 5th. No comments have been received to date.

Char McLennan discussed the Hearth Act, which brought the increased funding and is substantially changing how homeless services are to be provided. There are five areas of focus – homeless prevention, rapid re-housing, emergency shelters and transitional housing programs are “held harmless” at previous level of funding, outreach, and data collection for the HMIS information system. Service providers will be help define the specific activities to be addressed. CD Committee will review the applications for funding, and make recommendation to the City Council.

Chair Kimbler opened the Public Hearing, there being no speakers, closed the hearing.

Motion by Daryl Yankee, seconded by Justin Perpich, to approve the Substantial Amendments. Motion Passed, unanimously

2. Approval of Meeting Summary for March 27, 2012.

Because the second page of the meeting summary was not included in the packet by error, it was agreed to wait until the next meeting to approve.

Chair Kimbler welcomed the new members of the committee, John Evans, Justin Perpich, and Barbara Carr.

3. Presentation of Housing Indicator Report

Ben Van Tassel and Suzanne Kelly distributed copies of the “City of Duluth 2011 Housing Indicator Report” to the Committee members. This Report is done annually, and is used by the City, housing developers, rental owners, and others to understand the current housing market in Duluth. Information is gathered from a variety sources, including Census data, a survey of rental property owners, City departments, and realtors. Ben and Suzanne narrated a power point presentation that highlighted the findings of the Report. Items of note were Duluth’s continuing high rate of poverty compared to the State and Nation; employment is up; homeownership is below 60% of households for the first time since the Housing Report was started ten years ago; and the rate of foreclosure is down 23% from last year.

Discussion followed about the increasing need for affordable rental units, particularly for very low income households; the housing affordability “gap” that is very similar to 2010; and how vacant foreclosed properties that are abandoned and blighted are being demolished when warranted.

4. Review of Priority Needs in Consolidated Plan Table & Funding Priorities

Tables 2A, 2B and 2C of the Consolidated Plan set out the High, Medium and Low needs and priorities for funding. A High indicates the need will be funded within the 5 Year Plan, and Medium indicates it may be funded if there are dollars available, and Low means there is no such need or the need is addressed by other means. Committee members felt the tables should be reviewed, before the next application process. The Housing Report, feedback from the planned community forums, and information on the homeless continuum can be used to weigh what are the High needs.

Discussion followed. Streets and sidewalks might rate a medium. Affordable housing is still a major need in the community, but there doesn’t appear to be a gap for those in the 51% to 80% range. Staff will bring additional information on where the affordability gap starts related to household size. Youth services may be less of a priority for CDBG funding, now that the City’s new levy for Parks and Recreation is providing \$200,000 for programing to the youth agencies. Crime prevention has been included as a priority for many year, but never funded. The CD Committee will be approving a resolution at the June meeting to set 2012 funding priorities.

5. Discussion of Committee Evaluation Tool

Hamre related that staff had researched what other communities use to evaluate funding request, and distributed an example the Committee might like. The math could be simplified, and some sections, such as the Environmental Review might

be replaced with outcomes and performance criteria from the past year. Bonus points could be awarded to encourage collaborative efforts or Healthy Homes for housing rehab. Funding strategies could be added. Staff will make proposed changes, and bring to the next meeting for the Committee to review. Comment was made that it would be better to ask all of the questions of applicants upfront, rather than have to have follow-up questions after applications are received. Hamre related the application may need to be longer, once staff looks at the new evaluation tool, so all pertinent information is solicited.

6. Other:

Yankee talked about the importance of the upcoming community forums. The CD Committee will be hosting the May 22nd forum at Harrison. The May 24th forum will be at Grant Community Center. Flyers will be available, and an online survey to solicit input.

Keith review the timeline for the 2013 funding round for CDBG, HOME and ESG.

Motion by Deb Branley, seconded by Kristi Gordon, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed, unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 8:09 p.m.

Submitted:

Karen Olesen, Senior Planner