

## MINUTES

### CDBG Advisory Board

March 15, 2015

**Advisory Board Members Present:** Monica Weeber, Fauna Shaw, Kiona Baez Heath, Stephanie Seguino, Solveig Overby, Jessie Baker, Carole Lavigne, Jason L'Ecuyer

**Others Present:** Margaret Bozik and Denise Girard (CEDO)

The meeting opened at 6:00 p.m. with a review of the agenda. The minutes from the February 16, 2012, meeting were approved. There was no public comment.

The Board then moved on to identifying questions for applicants and conflicts of interest on the Development applications. Because there are a number of Board members not present tonight, there will be another review for conflicts of interest at the next Board meeting.

#### General Questions:

Q: I do have one overall general question. In the City I used to work in, the whole city did not fall within the CDBG boundary. Is that true in Burlington or does the CDBG district cover the entire City?

A: Yes, the entire city of Burlington is eligible. 56% of the Burlington population meets the HUD low/moderate income criteria, meaning that 56% of the population is at or below 80% of the area median income. Right now, the median family income for the Burlington - South Burlington MSA is \$76,700.

Q: For all CEDO applications: How much does CEDO receive from the city General Fund?

A: \$72,000 for Neighborhood Services and an amount reduced from \$25,000 for Community Justice Center rent. CEDO also receives around \$185,000 a year from the Housing Trust Fund.

Q: For all applicants: What cost-cutting measures have you implemented recently in light of the economic situation?

Q for all CEDO applicants:

- What will you do if CDBG continues to decline and there is no other funding source to support these activities?
- What % of employees regularly participate in peer group sessions? And is management required to actively participate?

- In Section VIII(b), you didn't answer the question about how the diversity of clientele compares with staff?

D1 Housing Initiatives Program (CEDO)

Conflicts: None

Q: In Section IV, the Project Description shows that households outside of Burlington are served, and in Section V people of Above Moderate Income are served. Who are they and why do they benefit from CDBG - are they all landlords?

Q: Under item IV. a. Project Description:

Unduplicated Total # of Burlington Households/Persons to be Served:

The numbers of Burlington residents to be served by the HIP are provided in the application as 412, 388 and 243. Where did these numbers come from?

They don't seem to correlate with the numbers under IX b. 1 on the table for Actual served households from the most recent funding period.

Can you provide street addresses where these proposed 412/388/243 households are located? (The number by street.)

How many households proposed to be served are in the Old North End?

How many are expected to be in buildings with 6 or less units?

Q: Under item VI.a. Within the Problem Statement, "This project addresses the following need to:"

Item 2 says the program offers "a revolving loan fund for down payment assistance, sliding scale (0-3%) loans for homeowner rehab, and low interest loans for landlords to improve their properties. CEDO provides owners with free technical assistance, design services and project management services for construction and rehab projects."

Can you provide some statistics for last year (2011) for these items:

Number households that got down payment assistance

Number of households that got sliding scale loans for homeowner rehab

Number of low interest loans for landlords to improve their properties

Number of owners who received free technical assistance, design services and project management for construction and rehab projects

Q: Item 5 says the program offers rental property owners financial and technical assistance. Can you provide some statistics for last year?

Number of rental properties with 6 or less units served under this item?

Number of units served that are in the Old North End?

Q: At item IX Impact and Evaluation, can you explain the statement under the table at b. 1.: "Every unit that receives funding and staff time for one or more fiscal years is counted in each year." To more clearly be able to see how many additional units will be served this year (as opposed to having been served in any prior year), can you provide the number of newly addressed households as opposed to those that were initially funded or received initial staff time in a prior year?

D2 Preservation & Creation of Permanently Affordable Housing (CHT)

Conflicts: None

Q: In Section II, in the City Neighborhoods activity, which buildings in the King Street neighborhood will be rehabbed?

Q: Is Winooski contributing any CDBG or other funds to assist City Neighborhoods activity in that city?

Q: In Section IV, who currently owns South Meadow?

Q: At item XV. Budget, item b. Proposed Budget Sources, can you explain what “Tax credit equity” is as a source of revenue? What happens at the end of the tax credit period?

D3 ReTRAIN YouthBuild Energy Efficiency Construction Project (ReSOURCE)

Conflicts: None

Q: Less than half of the households and trainees are Burlington residents. Are funds being contributed by the other cities and towns whose citizens will benefit from this training?

D4 Intervale Farms Program: Local Jobs for a Sustainable Burlington (Intervale Center)

Conflicts: None

Q: The Intervale Center appears to be a very successful operation with a projected budget increase. This CDBG subsidy is less than 1% of the Center's budget. Is it possible to support this training function from other program income?

D5 Business Financing & Technical Assistance (CEDO)

Conflicts: None

Q: Almost 80% of this assistance is supported by CDBG but only about half of the beneficiaries are low income. Is it possible to target CDBG funds more directly to low income entrepreneurs, and fund the higher income recipients from other sources?

Q: At item IV. Project Description, under item a. the table of specific activities, how much of the CDBG funds will go into the Revolving Loan Fund? How much will be allocated for Loan Fund Administration?

Q: At item VII. Program Goals, item 3) There is a statement: “Extension of Burlington’s Renewal Community designation, through 2011, is currently pending before Congress.” Has anything happened on this?

Q: Under item IX. Impact and Evaluation, item b. 2. Can you provide a list of the 14 new businesses and the 4 businesses expanded/relocated/retained?

Q: Under Item X. Community Participation and Partners, it states that Door-to door visits are made to Old North End businesses. What is the scheduled frequency of these door-to-door visits?

Q: Under Item X. Community Participation and Partners, it states that Customer service surveys are sent out annually. Are the results of these surveys posted to the CEDO website? Could the latest customer service survey results be provided?

Q: Under Item X. Community Participation and Partners, item b. re: “Who do you mainly work with?” Do you work with Mercy Connections and the Women’s Small Business Program? It’s not listed as a partner. (See application D7)

Q: On page 2, you cite 200 unduplicated Burlington people (section IV) and at the bottom (Section V), you say 230 unduplicated Burlington people served – could you clarify?

Q: Is there any effort made to figure out where the people who take these jobs come from? Are they Burlington residents? Do they come from elsewhere? Do you know what Burlington neighborhoods they come from? Are they refugees?

Q: How many businesses hired the 59 people in the jobs reported on page 5, Section IX (b) (1) and (2)?

Q: Can you provide the documentation for the jobs that would otherwise have been lost on the retained jobs counted on page 5, same section?

Q: In Section X(b), how often do you contact clients?

#### D6 Sustainable Economic Development Strategies (CEDO)

Conflicts: None

Q: Briefly, how is this program different from D5? The descriptions in our chart are almost identical.

Q: In Section V.c. there is an assumption that ALL jobs in the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy Area are low and moderate income. Is there any evidence of the actual low and moderate percentage of people who have benefited and will benefit from this CEDO program?

Q: IV. Project Description, Can you identify the projects in the Old North End?

Q: Item IX, Impact and Evaluation

- a. At item 2, how many jobs were created and where? (versus “retained”)
- b. How do you define a “retained” job? Are you implying that a “retained” job is one that would have been eliminated but for the services provided under this project? How do you determine that a job has been “retained” for the purposes of including it in the number 358 jobs created or retained during the most recent completed funding period? Can you provide the documentation to show that jobs would otherwise have disappeared?

Q: Item XI Sustainability. Would city budget support for this type of economic development activity work better than dependence on state and federal grants and CDBG funds?

Q: There are only two applications (both from CEDO) where the amount requested increased from 2011 to 2012. I think those are D6 Sustainable Economic Development Strategies and D8 Burlington Brownfields Program. Given that everyone else either level-funded or reduced their request, I'm wondering if there are significant reasons why you increased your requests.

Q: Is there any effort made to figure out where the people who take these jobs come from? Are they Burlington residents? Do they come from elsewhere? Do you know what Burlington neighborhoods they come from? (Especially as you cite persistent pockets of poverty in the ONE – is there a link to people hired?) Are they refugees?

Q: Where you say, “Our clients generally reflect the diversity found among CEDO staff,” could you be more specific?

#### D7 Women’s Small Business Program (Mercy Connections)

Conflicts: None

Q: In Section IX, Impact and Evaluation, results are reported for all participants. I would like to know:

In the Start-up program, how many participants actually completed "bank ready" business plans:

- in fall 2010, of the 7 low-mod Burlington participants?
- in spring 2011, of the 4 low-mod Burlington participants?

In the Getting Serious program in 2010, how many of the 8 low-mod Burlington participants actually selected business ideas to pursue further?

Q: Are you discussing whether to make this program more inclusive (i.e., to include men?)

Q: Do you have a directory of alumni and their businesses?

#### D8 Burlington Brownfields Program (CEDO)

Conflicts: None

Q: Dealer.com appears to be a rapidly growing company with plenty of money and a well-paid staff. How does another parking lot fulfill the 3 anti-poverty goals of CDBG, and why is public money needed for it?

Q: Is there a GIS map and layers documenting the work in progress and the status of projects? Can projects underway in the Old North End be identified?

Q: Item IV. Project Description, item a. in the table of Specific Service Activities, How do you prioritize projects listed for “continued work”? Do you address small properties/projects as well as large ones? Are there barriers to addressing small properties/projects?

Q: Item VI. Problem Statement.

a. Where is the list of the 178 Hazardous Burlington sites and their status in redevelopment under this project? How do you determine which of these sites actually get priority? What are the criteria that you use to determine which sites get priority?

b. Item VI. Problem Statement, item b. states “The Brownfields Program obtains and releases reliable, verifiable data into the public domain, demystifying the redevelopment process, and reducing hazards to the community.” Where is this information posted for the public?

Q: Item XIV Financial Narrative, at item d. What expenses are included in the “general administration” of 7.49%?

Q: There are only two applications (both from CEDO) where the amount requested increased from 2011 to 2012. I think those are D6 Sustainable Economic Development Strategies and D8 Burlington Brownfields Program. Given that everyone else either level-funded or reduced their request, I'm wondering if there are significant reasons why you increased your request.

#### D9 Heineberg Senior & Community Center (Chittenden Senior Citizens Alliance)

Conflicts: None

Q: How does this upgrade meet the 3 anti-poverty goals of CDBG?

#### D10 Neighborhood Revitalization (CEDO)

Conflicts: None

Interest: Carole – this project is impacting my neighborhood and I'm part of a group organizing around the skatepark

Q: How does this project meet the anti-poverty goals of the CDBG program?

Q: How is Act 250 review going to impact this project?

Q: Is the skateboard park part of this project? If so, how?

The Board then reviewed the assignment for its next meeting, which is to review the answers from the applicants, rate the applications and assign individual funding amounts that balance to the amount available. HUD has now released the final CDBG allocations for the year, with a small cut to Burlington beyond the deeper cut reflected in HUD's preliminary allocations. The rating sheet has been updated to show the new amount available.

The Board reviewed the "budget-balancing rules" used for this year's Public Service allocation process. At the next meeting, the Board will decide whether to use the same rules for the Development applications and will also have a general discussion about allocation priorities. Two priorities mentioned at tonight's meeting were to focus on poverty alleviation and to focus on direct benefit to the people we want to serve.

Things that worked well at this meeting included:

- The level of questioning was deeper this year (more detailed) – that's a good thing.
- The level of comfort and respect that people have for each other in the room – comfortable atmosphere for discussion.

The meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.