



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Community Development Board - Meeting Minutes

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Regular Meeting of the Community Development Board

December 5, 2023

Board Members Present: Rebecca Noell, Jim Corson, Joe Stockburger, Erica Doornek, Kathleen Candelaria, James Allen, Jenna Martin

Board Members Excused: None

Board Members Absent: None

City Council Representative: Denise Joy

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Carly Collins, Dina Harmon, Tam Rodier, Wyeth Friday

Guests: Amanda Stonerock, Stonerock Consulting

Welcome / Introductions: The Community Development (CD) Board met in the 6th Floor Conference Room of the Miller Building. Board Chair Rebecca Noell called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Board members and guests were invited to introduce themselves.

Announcements: Brenda Becket said this would be Board member Jim Corson's final meeting. He has served on the Board for 8 years.

Public Comment: None

Meeting Minutes: Board member Jim Corson made a motion to approve the November 7, 2023, minutes as written and distributed. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and the minutes were unanimously approved.

Tam Rodier noted today's guest was here for the discussion on the results of the HOME-ARP Request for Qualifications. She asked if the Board wanted to move that item up on the agenda so our guest would not need to sit through other agenda items. Jim Corson made a motion to move the item up on the agenda. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken and unanimously approved.

HOME-ARP Request for Qualifications Review, Discussion and Site Visit Planning: Carly Collins reported that \$1,029,623 is available to eligible organizations for eligible services / activities. The City received seven completed applications via the online application process, totaling just over \$2.5 million. A summary of the applications received was sent to Board members with the agenda. Full applications are posted online at www.billingsmt.gov/HOMEarp. All qualifying populations have been covered by applications received, so it is unlikely a second round of applications will be needed.

Carly said staff needs to tweak a few procedures to ensure program compliance. She is working with City finance staff to design and implement.

Grant Agreements will be required for each agency, and for each service and/or staffing request. If staffing, the agency must meet specific requirements (Equal Employment Opportunity, target advertising to low-income residents, etc.). In addition, staffing costs can only be reimbursed if there are documented beneficiaries and/or an increase in services

provided. If necessary, beneficiary numbers and/or grant amounts will be negotiated. All payments will be made via reimbursement to the agency following receipt of quarterly reports. All funds must be expended by September 30, 2030.

- **Site Visits:** CD Board members agreed to make the following site visits before the end of December. Each Board member will then report back to the CD Board on or before the January 2, 2024 meeting.
 - **Alternatives, Inc.** – Joe Stockburger
 - **Family Promise** – James Allen
 - **HomeFront** – Kathleen Candelaria
 - **HRDC** – Rebecca Noell
 - **Native American Development Corporation** – Erick Doornek and Joe Stockburger
 - **RiverStone Health** – Rebecca Noell
 - **United Way Continuum of Care** – Jim Corson

Affordable Housing Development (AHD) Application: Dina Harmon provided the following application highlights:

- \$1.2 million request for HOME funding,
- Construction is hoped to start in July or August 2024,
- 32 units total: 14 one-bedroom, 14 two-bedroom and 4 three-bedroom, and
- The applicant continues to do lots of outreach within the neighborhood and community; neighbors seem to like it, especially after seeing Jackson Court.

Wyeth said he heard the Shiloh Glen apartments near the intersection of Shiloh Road and King Avenue had let go of the Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC) awarded to the project and they are now charging market rent. He said losing these affordable housing units is very unfortunate, especially when they are really needed in the Billings community.

Brenda Beckett confirmed there would be a 20-year period of affordability for the Mitchell Court project that will be enforced through a Deed Restriction Agreement. If the developer fails to meet the low-income and/or the HOME rents requirements, the full \$1.2 million must be repaid to the City. The City would then be required to repay HUD with non-federal funds.

Board Member Jim Corson moved to recommend the City Council approve the Mitchell Court Affordable Housing Development application and allocate \$1,200,000 in HOME funds. Board member Kathleen Candelaria seconded the motion. There was no additional discussion. A vote was taken, and the motion was unanimously approved.

Staff Reports:

- **Affordable Housing Development Program:** Dina Harmon said she has received no other applications.
- **First Time Home Buyer Program (FTHB):** Dina reported two households will be closing on their homes within the next month.
- **Foreclosure Acquisition / Housing Rehabilitation Program:** Tam Rodier shared the following:

Steffanich Property

- Staff is having trouble attracting a contractor to implement the Xeriscaping plan in the front and east side yards. After discussion, the Board consensus was to complete the xeriscaping prior to selling.
- Appraisal will be scheduled as soon as we have a xeriscaping contract. Sales price will be the lesser of the appraised value or the acquisition and development costs.
- Marketing flyer is complete and ready to be distributed to approved FTHB applicants.

1709 St. Johns Avenue

- Inspections have been completed (home, arborist, lead-based paint, and asbestos).
- Request for Quotes for tree trimming and removal has been sent out; quotes due by December 15.

- Request for Quotes for asbestos abatement has been sent out; quotes due by December 22.
- The next step is to finalize the Final Work List and advertise for quotes.
- Board members are invited to tour the property after today's meeting.

- **CDBG / CDBG-CV Projects:** Tam also gave the following project updates:
 - Comanche Park**
 - The sensory pathway was recently poured and the concrete is curing (pictures shared).
 - The next step is to install the new basketball system.
 - North Park**
 - The pre-fabricated restroom was being trucked to the site when one of the trucks was involved in an accident and the unit was damaged. That section of the unit is being rebuilt and delivery will be rescheduled. Wyeth said he heard this morning the unit would be craned onto the site next week.
 - The existing shelter has been demolished. Site preparation and installation of the adult exercise equipment and new shelter is underway (pictures shared).

Parks Accessibility Projects:

- A contractor is under contract to install the accessibility improvements at the Pioneer Park restroom, North Park Center, and the Zimmerman Center. Work should be completed before the end of the year.

Art Sculpture / Pioneer Park:

- The State Historic Preservation Office did not concur with our “no adverse effect” determination. The project will therefore not be moving forward. The CDBG funding has gone back into the “pot” for allocation to another CDBG-eligible project.

- **Billings Metro VISTA Project (BMVP):** Carly Collins reported the following:
 - Several offers to VISTA applicants are currently pending.
 - Recently placed a second VISTA for February; will be serving at the Yellowstone Art Museum. The first VISTA placed last month will be serving at the Adaptive Performance Center.
 - She will start working on the Request for Proposals for July / August host sites in the next few weeks.
 - She received a call from a Billings property owner who wants to make a rental property available to VISTAs first.

Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings:

Wyeth said VISTA Inanna Hencke has been involved with the City's Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) Committee. She is doing some really great work and will be doing a CPTED update presentation to the City Council soon. She may also make presentations to the CD Board and Planning Board. The City has some funds available to implement CPTED recommendations, but CDBG funds may also be requested for parks in low-income areas. It is likely they will focus on the top six crime area parks first (North, South, Dehler, Pioneer, Stewart, Skate).

Jim Corson said he has really enjoyed being on the CD Board for the past eight years. During that time, he thought he had only missed two meetings! He is proud of the work the Board has done. As a VISTA alum, he said he hopes to continue assisting with VISTA orientation presentations into the future.

Next Meeting: Board Chair Rebecca Noell adjourned the meeting at approximately 4:20 p.m. The next regular in-person meeting will be held at 3:00 p.m. on January 2, 2024. She also invited those interested to participate in an optional tour of the Saint Johns property following the meeting.