

Community Development Board
Meeting Minutes
March 10, 2009

Members Present: Jim Hartung, Sandy Weiss, Emily Shaffer, Kathy Walters, Kamber Parker, David Goodridge

Members Absent: Duane Loken, Uriah Edmunds

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Lynda Woods, Doris Cole

Others Present: Janelle Luppen, Yellowstone County GIS Project Coordinator

The meeting was called to order at 3:03 p.m. by Vice Chair Weiss who welcomed our guest.

Public Comment Period: None.

Minutes: Minutes of February 3, 2009, were approved unanimously on a motion by Walters, seconded by Shaffer.

Census Mapping: *The Census Bureau requires that the process of dividing/merging census tracts be an open process that involves any and all agencies and organizations with an interest in the outcome. An opportunity to discuss census tract changes with Janelle Luppen, the GIS Project Coordinator who is working with the Census Bureau.*

Janelle Luppen, Yellowstone County GIS Project Coordinator and liaison to the CHRB, gave a brief background of the 2010 Census process and noted that editing the Census Tract and places is an open process and that anyone can be involved. She reported that three areas exceeded the maximum numbers of population and households that needed to be split. Lockwood was the main area of expansion. Tract 1701 is proposed to be split into Tract 1703 and Tract 1704. Luppen invited all to submit comments and questions to her at the County GIS office. Beckett suggested the Luppen discuss this process with the neighborhood task forces because any changes in the Census Tract could possibly impact these groups.

CD Board Applications – Site Visit Assignments: *An opportunity for the CD Board to discuss the results of the applicant site visits.*

Hartung noted some confusion on the timeline of housing/neighborhood projects and public services projects. Beckett noted that housing/neighborhood projects are bricks and mortar types of projects and are renewable on an annual basis while public services are soft services and are renewable every three years. Beckett noted that the application instructions were very clear as to the timeline. It was suggested that staff better clarify the distinction between the two and the different timelines for next year's application.

HN - 9

Living Independently for Today & Tomorrow - Hartung noted that they asked for \$30,000 with a timeline of one year due to confusion of the

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| | instruction and differentiation between housing/neighborhood and public services projects. He noted that this needs to be clarified during LIFTT's budget hearing. |
| HN - 10 | Rebuilding Together – None. |
| HN - 14 | Washington Street Infrastructure – Beckett noted that she received an update from Loken on this project. There are concerns by some neighbors about the natural spaces and county islands that would be affected by this project and about city divisions writing applications for projects. She noted that the division would be willing to write an application for any infrastructure project that mitigates barriers to affordable housing development in low income areas within the city limits. Staff also writes applications for funding on behalf of task forces which consist of nonprofit organizations and private individuals at this point. Other neighborhood concerns are regarding the density of the proposed affordable housing project. |
| PS - 1 | Boys & Girls Club - Gang Prevention / Graffiti Removal – Weiss reported that Billings' clubhouse staff would be teaching the "StreetSmart for Kids" program to children ages 11-14 years of age. This is a 12-week program aimed at gang prevention. They are also organizing a service program to help remove graffiti from residential areas. She noted that 600 kids per day are enrolled in clubhouses in the Billings area. Weiss also reported that 58%-59% of adults who have attended the Boys & Girls Club have said, "Thank you for saving my life". |
| PS - 2 | Community Housing Resource Board – Goodridge reported that this board provides education and outreach on fair housing issues. Most of the issues they hear about are landlord/tenant issues and some of them are referred to other agencies for enforcement purposes. |
| PS - 3 | Crisis Center - Seeds of Success – Walters noted that the Crisis Center is a 24/7 service for alleviating homelessness problems at 1/3 the cost of the hospitals. They are asking for funds to purchase new computers since the ones they are using now were old when they got them and they are afraid they may lose all the valuable information stored in them. |
| PS - 4 | Forever Families – Walters reported that this is a resource center for adopted and foster children and their families and is run on a strictly volunteer basis. The funds requested are for rent and utilities only. |
| PS - 5 | Housing Montana HomeOwnership Center – Parker noted this is for their financial fitness classes, which is 6 sessions a month for a total of 15 hours and involve 10-25 families. By having 10 per session paying \$40, they should break even on the classes and should eventually become self-sustaining. Most of their funding is through the USDA, which is a rural development program. They are certified through NeighborWorks. |
| PS - 6 | HRDC - Emergency Services – Shaffer reported that this program is for emergency services only and that they will be out of money withing three months. Beckett noted HRDC may be receiving stimulus funding to support this project. |

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| PS - 7 | Interfaith Hospitality Network - Partners Home – Beckett noted that Loken reported that it is a much need and very forward thinking to help homeless people. It is a direct services program. |
| PS - 8 | Project Homeless Connect – Hartung reported that this project leveraged lots of money and many volunteers. Beckett noted the city has been VISTA project in the works and a possibility of 5-10 VISTA placements. She noted there is a meeting at 10:00 on Friday to discuss the VISTAs. She also noted that the Mayor's Committee is desperate for this position. |
| PS - 9 | Scottish Rite Clinic - Pediatric Therapy – Walters reported that they charge now on a sliding scale. The cost for one child is \$4,000 to \$120,000. This is an early intervention program and over 200 therapies per month. |
| PS - 10 | Southgate Cop Shop – Goodridge noted with no money the building will go away. He noted that the project has potential to be self-sustaining after one year because of the tax increment financial district (TIFD). |
| PS - 11 | Volunteers of America - Independence Hall Enrichment – None |
| PS - 12 | Yellowstone Health Partnership - Med Assistance Program – Hartung reported that this program assists low income individuals get drugs for free. Most of the drugs are for mental health and they leverage over \$6 million in free medication. |
| PS - 13 | Young Families Early Head Start – Shaffer reported that the funding is requested for two more units for early intervention for teen parenting. |
| PS - 14 | YWCA Gateway House – Parker noted there is a new director who is currently in the process of ironing out the kinks and quirks for this safe house for battered persons. |

Public Hearing Schedule: Beckett distributed the tentative public hearing schedule to the board and gave a brief background on the process. Goodridge suggested that more time be spent with each applicant and less with the task forces. After discussion, it was decided to allow 15 minutes for each applicant.

Staff Reports: Beckett then reported on the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act which is stimulus money. This is CDBG stimulus money that we will be receiving, which HUD wants us to amend the current 2008 funding allocation. The City will be receiving \$190,430 and staff may recommend the stimulus funding be allocated to the First Time Home Buyer program to enter into contract within 120 days of receiving notice (as required). Staff still does not know how much we will receive for CDBG / HOME in 2009-2010. Beckett then distributed new income projections and staff reports.

Neighborhood Concerns: *Opportunity for board members to share information or concerns.*

Walters announced that Forever Families is holding their third annual dinner and auction at the Holiday Inn free of charge. Everything has been donated by the volunteers. Beckett distributed new newsletters from HRDC and YCCOA's Resource Center.

Set Next Meeting Agenda and Adjournment: The next regular meeting will be April 7, 2009 from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Meeting adjourned at 5:00 p.m. on a motion by Walters and seconded by Shaffer.