

Community Development Board
Meeting Minutes
August 3, 2010

Present: Emily Shaffer, Jim Hartung, Sandy Weiss, Tom Mahlen, and Duane Loken

Not Present: Kamber Kelly, Uriah Edmunds, and David Goodridge

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Dina Billington, Lynda Woods, Jill Bunge, Hanna Noel, and Doris Cole

The meeting was called to order at 3:08 p.m. by Sandy Weiss, chair. Introductions were made to introduce Tom Mahlen and two AmeriCorps VISTAs: Jill Bunge and Hanna Noel.

Announcements: None.

Public Comments: None.

Minutes: Hartung noted a correction on the June 1 minutes to add the word “report” to the first sentence under the Staff Reports / Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Properties Review. A motion was made by Loken to approve the May 4th minutes as printed and the June 1st minutes as corrected. The motion was seconded by Shaffer and passed unopposed.

Staff Reports / Neighborhood Stabilization Program (NSP) Properties Review: Beckett discussed a newly acquired property, 1128 Lynn Avenue. This property has new vinyl siding and there is \$25,000 set aside for the rehabilitation of this property plus additional funding for Energy Star appliances. She showed pictures of the three properties, which closed on July 19th. She updated the board on the moisture intrusion at the Cambridge property. An engineer has been hired to look into the problem and offer a remedy. There are three possible reasons for the intrusion: ground water seepage; ditch water seepage; or from the Kings Green drain field. The State has agreed to another \$30,000 to remediate the moisture intrusion on the property. Discussion then ensued on the cost of the properties vs. the eventual sales price of the property. The properties are to be sold first to households at 50% area median income (AMI) and then up to 80% AMI.

AmeriCorps VISTA Introductions: Hanna Noel moved here from Connecticut, went to a small school in Maine, and studied French and Anthropology. She is very interested in community gardening and food security. Jill Bunge is from northwest Ohio and attended a small environmental liberal arts college in Vermont called Green Mountain College where she worked on a little organic farm and embraced the local agricultural movement there. She and Hanna will be doing a couple of needs assessments to establish the need for community gardens. Upon completion of the assessments, they will split up and one will take the garden initiative and the other will take the food security initiative. Beckett noted that there are five VISTAs working through the Billings Metro VISTA Project (MVP) instead of the original three, bringing an additional \$60,000 investment for the community. The other city VISTA is Daniele (Dani) who will be working with the Billings Area Resource Network (BARN) and the Community Housing Resource Board (CHRB). Dani is originally from Michigan and attended school there, majoring in English. Discussion then ensued regarding the community garden.

The other two VISTAs are Liz Erberlin who is working at United Way on the VITA program and Sara Stout who is working with the HUB and doing an assessment and capacity building, business planning, grants. Beckett updated the board on last year's VISTAs. Weiss welcomed the VISTAs and asked that they pass it on to the other VISTAs.

Neighborhood Concerns & Happenings: Beaudry discussed the Medical Marijuana moratorium and the three proposals before the City Council.

Beckett noted that we have a new board member if Council approves her on Monday night. Kathleen Candelaria is representing the South Side neighborhood. She also noted that our HUD representative will be in Billings next week to audit the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) programs and Community Development's procedures. It was noted that a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be available on Thursday for a social enterprise project involving the homeless. This project is to be in the downtown area or next to the Tax Increment Funding District (TIFD). \$300,000 is available through a HUD EDI grant.

Adjournment: The next meeting will be on September 7, 2010. A Board training will be conducted in the near future for both new and current board members. Shaffer noted that the annual North Park Neighborhood Task Force picnic will be on Thursday at North Park. Meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.