

Community Development Board
Meeting Minutes
March 1, 2011
3:00 p.m., 4th Floor Large Conference Room,
Parmly Billings Library
510 N. Broadway, Billings, Montana

Board Members Present: Jim Hartung, Patt Leikam, Tom Mahlen, Kamber Kelly, Kathleen Candelaria, and Emily Shaffer

Board Members Excused: David Goodridge

Staff Present: Candi Beaudry, Brenda Beckett, Casey Brown, Jill Bunge, Hanna Noel, Daniele Reisbig, Lynda Woods, and Doris Cole

Welcome / Introduction / Announcements: The meeting was called to order at 3:00 p.m. by Jim Hartung, chair, and roll call was taken. Hartung commented on Project Homeless Connect at the Shrine and acknowledged Daniele Reisbig for her part as organizer in the day's events. Beckett announced that the City of Billings Community Development Division had just received news that its application for the Fair Housing Initiatives Program (FHIP) has been approved. This grant will bring \$125,000 into the community for fair housing education and outreach. Partners supported in this program are: City of Billings – Community Development Division, Community Housing Resource Board, Interfaith Hospitality Network, Rimrock Foundation, and Yellowstone AIDS Project. She also noted that the Self Help Law Center will get a Fair Housing Library and the American Indian Homeownership Partnership will be developing flippix brochures as part of the grant under Community Development. She also announced that Montana Fair Housing was awarded funding that these are the only two grants awarded in the region, which covers several states, this year.

Public Comment: None.

Meeting Minutes: The following corrections were made by the chair:

1. Page 1, second paragraph under Staff Reports, first line: Add "who" and "be" to make the sentence read correctly.
2. Page 2, first paragraph, Housing Authority, half way through paragraph: Remove "cap" after smaller 1-2 bedroom units.
3. Page 2, four lines up from bottom: Add "HAB" and an "s" behind the word serve.

Minutes were approved as corrected on a motion by Patt Leikam and seconded by Emily Shaffer.

Staff Reports: Beckett talked about an extension in construction contracts for the Neighborhood Stabilization Program until the end of June to accommodate landscaping and additional grounds work needed at the properties. Twenty-six households are eligible for the program and three properties are available. Both the Lynn and Cambridge houses must be sold to people of 50% area median income according to the State and the Custer house is targeted to 60-80% area median income. Because Dina Billington is away at HUD training on the Uniform Relocation Act, Beckett gave the First Time Home Buyers (FTHB) report. She reported that \$36,000 remains uncommitted in FTHB.

Lynda Woods reported that there have been ten projects so far this year: 5 currently in construction and 5 are completed. Seven projects are out for bid and there are slots for three more, with one closing on Monday. She noted that the funds are 75% committed. She also reported that Minor Home Repair is 36% committed. This program is for emergency repair and mobile homes. Tree program received no funds this year and the Paint Program is 69% committed with one waiting for the weather to warm up and we have received two new applications. CDBG-R, which is energy efficiency and weatherization, is 100% committed almost 100% expended with one project to complete.

Casey Brown updated the Board members on her progress as a new VISTA. She has been doing background reading on the Community Development programs, designing a survey for past participants for feedback on the program information and redeveloping materials.

Dani Reisbig reported on the aftermath of Project Homeless Connect (PHC). The committee is collecting all data / outcomes and will soon have a formal report. She is working on the PHC video and is looking for background music. The Continuum of Care is working on a strategic plan. She noted that the Community Housing Resource Board (CHRB) is working on April's Fair Housing Month activities. There will be an event every week, which has never happened before. They are hoping to reach populations that have never been reached before with this information. She announced that the premier event will be the movie "A Raisin in the Sun" starring Sidney Poitier and a discussion afterwards. CHRB has a new executive director, Don Smith. They are also working on a survey on how to reach vulnerable people for the workshops.

Hanna Noel / Jill Bunge reported on the Food Security / Community Gardens Project. Hanna noted that there will be two school gardens: at Ponderosa School and at Washington School. They went to the schools to scope out the land and have designed the layout of the gardens. They met with the teachers about seed starts in the classrooms, cafeteria composting, and warm farms in the classrooms to get the children excited about this summer project. They are also working with Volunteers of America's (VOA) Independence Hall about a garden there and have had several meetings with them. VOA is currently working on identifying individuals to design and spearhead the project for them. The residences are excited about the project and ready to get started. Jill reported on the Food Policy Council, which brings together a lot of stakeholders from the different realms of food: emergency food service providers, producers, distributors. They have been meeting since October and, at the last meeting, had 11 new participants. Members include RiverStone Health, St. Vincent's Healthcare, Good Earth Market, Food Service, food service directors at School District #2, First Interstate Foundation, United Way, and the Chamber of Commerce. These individuals came out of a Childhood Hunger Summit held in January 2010. All are very interested, committed parties and they are collecting and compiling hunger data already collected in Billings. They will then have a baseline and more comprehensive report of the data so they can see what data is missing and if a more comprehensive needs assessment needs to be conducted. They are also updating a very comprehensive food assistance brochure to be distributed throughout the city.

Community Development Application Review: Beckett noted that there are a few program changes to the Rehab program which Woods will discuss. She also noted that, with the FHIP grant, staff will be implementing visit-ability issues in the Affordable Housing Program application which are not currently addressed. Basically, this means that anything built with HOME or CDBG funds will have an accessible first level or will be able to be modified to accommodate people with disabilities such as mobility, visual, or sensory issues. Woods noted the changes to the Rehab program which includes implementing increased assistance amounts of up to \$25,000 on a case-by-case basis; thereby, allowing program staff

authority to offer additional assistance to those homeowners that are in need of increased funding to address substantial rehabilitation for major basic systems. Most homeowners Woods works with have been in these homes for at least ten years or more. They are older homes that are disrepair and need major work to them to remain safe, secure and sustainable. The loans are deferred no interest loans which are attached as a silent second on the home and repaid when there is a change in title due to the homeowner is no longer in the home either because they have sold it or refinanced it with additional cash out of the loan. Loans are subordinated only when there is a refinance that reduces the monthly payment and ends in a lower interest rate. There is a forgiveness feature that begins after Year 10 of the loan, in which the loan is forgiven at a rate of \$1,000 per year until it is paid in full. The forgiveness feature is offered to those individuals who are at or below 80% area median income, which is verified.

The Minor Home Repair Program and the Paint Program also have changes. All taxable market values will be set at \$85,000 as determined on the CAMA detail on the County Property Tax website.

homeWORD Agreement Modification: Beckett gave a brief background of the homeWORD agreement and the changes that are to be made to the agreement, which is out of compliance with HUD for the sale of the remaining three homes in the High Sierra Subdivision. The agreement with homeWORD will be modified to state that upon sale of the homes, the City's funds will be recaptured which means that \$20,000 for each home will come back to Community Development. We have also added net proceeds language to the agreement as well as the period of affordability which is set at ten years. By making these changes, there is no impact to the homeowner but the division can use 10% for HOME administration. *Kamber Kelly moved to accept staff recommendation to approval of modifications to homeWORD's Development Agreement to include recapture, net proceeds and period of affordability language changes. Emily Shaffer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Kings Green Reallocation: Funds are remaining in Kings Green III and staff recommends moving those funds to Kings Green IV. This funding will be used for preliminary engineering costs to begin estimates and facilitate the request for proposals (RFP) process so that construction can begin soon after July 1, 2011. *Emily Shaffer made a motion to reallocate \$39,043 remaining in Kings Green Phase III to Phase IV to allow staff to begin the ground work for Phase IV infrastructure on schedule. The motion was seconded by Kathleen Candelaria and it passed unanimously.*

Site Visits:

- **HN-12 – Housing Authority, Section 8 Deposit Assistant – \$15,000.** Patt Leikam reported that Housing Authority (HAB) has no other funds for Section 8 Deposit Assistance and that they work with Family Services, Inc. and HRDC to assist low / very low income households obtain housing. All participants will be serviced by the Housing Authority. Funding will help households between 30%-50% area median income.
- **HN-15 – Housing Authority, Whitetail Square Subdivision Private Park / Community Gardens Project - \$50,000.** Patt Leikam also reported on the park / community garden. HAB will be able to leverage \$179,262 for this project. It will serve the Whitetail Square apartments owned by the HAB. All \$50,000 will be used in the construction of the park and community vegetable / flower garden. The area will be fully accessible to elderly, disabled, and minority populations. There will be curb cuts, pathways and raised garden beds.
- **HN-13 – Rebuilding Together - \$10,000.** Kathleen Candelaria reported on Rebuilding Together, which is a volunteer group of individuals / contractors who help with energy efficiency and

handicapped accessibility issues for very low / low-income households. Five homes were assisted in 2010.

- **HN-14 – Yellowstone County Council on Aging Minor Home Repair – \$5,000.** Dave Goodridge will email his report since he is not present at the meeting.
- **PS-2 – South Side Senior Center Kitchen Equipment - \$30,000.** Emily Shaffer reported on this project, noting that the project is about \$60,000 to replace the coolers, stove, dishwasher, hot wells. The project will require adding an additional room on the back of the kitchen for the walk-in coolers instead of having them inside the kitchen, making the space more user-friendly. They have been raising additional funding for this project and hope to have it completed this year.
- **PS-3 – Tumbleweed Runaway Street Outreach Program - \$30,000.** Tom Mahlen reported on Tumbleweed, noting that CDBG funding will be used for two years of training for outreach staff; purchase equipment for their van so they can pass out hot food; and eventually spend funds on additional outreach hours for their outreach workers; and out on basic needs and materials on community services in the community. Mahlen noted that Tumbleweed is a well-funded organization and that they will accomplish everything even without CDBG funding except the training. Currently, they do not anticipate any serious budget cuts in the near future.

Consolidated Plan Review: Brenda Beckett gave a very brief review of the Consolidated Plan and passed a few copies of drafted charts. She discussed the Task Force Rankings and noted the following rankings, with 58 respondents

1. Minor Home Repair - 49 votes
2. Housing Rehab – 45 votes
3. First Time Home Buyers – 43 votes
4. YCCOA Minor Home Repair – 32 votes
5. Affordable Housing – 26 votes

The official draft must be posted online by March 25th.

Neighborhood Concerns: Beckett noted that the land deal on city-owned Block 142, Lots 9-12 has been suspended until City Council can advertise and seek more bids. For more information, please see City Council Minutes of February 14, 2011, page 11, at <http://ci.billings.mt.us/Archive.aspx?ADID=4208>.

Meeting adjourned at 5:05 pm.