

**HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT COMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF PUBLIC MEETING**

Tuesday, March 24, 2009  
EVANSTON CIVIC CENTER  
7:30 P.M. – Room 2404

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Ald. Hansen, Ald. Jean-Baptiste, Michele Lacy, Ald. Rainey, Crawford Richmond

**PRESIDING OFFICIAL:** Ald. Rainey, Chair

**STAFF PRESENT:** Sarah Flax

**I. CALL TO ORDER/DECLARATION OF QUORUM**

Ald. Rainey called the meeting to order at 7:42pm, there being a quorum.

**II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF JANUARY 27, 2009 MEETING.**

Ald. Jean-Baptiste moved approval, Ald. Hansen seconded the motion; the minutes were approved unanimously as submitted.

**III. FAÇADE PROJECT PROPOSAL: 708 GREENLEAF STREET**

Proposed façade project was discussed. Sarah Breen questioned whether funds could be used for a building that is not currently occupied by a business, and if allowable, would funding this project potentially affect funding for buildings that are occupied by viable businesses. Staff responded that the regulations do not restrict use of funds to occupied properties and noted that all applications for buildings that are occupied by businesses have funds reserved (North Suburban Auto Supply and Sir Speedy). A vote on this project was tabled until the April 21 meeting in order to get input from Ald Bernstein, as the property is in the 4<sup>th</sup> Ward.

**IV. 1817 CHURCH STREET DISPOSITION – RFP DISCUSSION**

Revision 1 of the draft RFP was discussed; the following changes will be incorporated:

- Use “Evanston organization/business” consistently throughout the document
- Revise sections IV. and VI. to indicate that M/W/EBE Utilization plan will be required of the organization/business selected; attachments relating to this will remain but need not be completed as part of the initial proposal.
- Under Submittal Requirements, include the following for non-profits: proof of 501(c)(3) status, organization financials for last three years, last two audits and most recent annual report. For businesses submitting a bid, use North Branch Library RFP as model for what documentation to request as evidence of operating history and current capacity.

Because of the unique nature of this RFP, it was agreed that additional publicity will be needed to reach organizations/businesses that may be interested. Staff will develop a supplemental list to the City’s existing channels to send the RFP that will include museums/cultural institutions (including members of Cultural Connections program), key foundations (MacArthur, Polk, Chicago Community Trust), the Donors Forum, Metropolitan Planning Council; additional ways to reach African-Americans and other minorities with a connection to Evanston who may have an interest in this project will be developed (e.g., Kellogg School of Business African-American Alumni Association).

Ald. Hansen moved that the RFP be revised as discussed for review/approval at the April 21 CD Committee meeting; Ald. Jean-Baptiste seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

**V. UPDATES FROM STAFF:**

**a. ALLEY SPECIAL ASSESSMENT ASSISTANCE**

Staff noted that interest in this program and eligible applications have increased significantly within the last year; as in past years, additional funds will probably be needed to fund all eligible applicants. A request for assistance from a homeowner who was not eligible initially but is now due to loss of income was reviewed and determined to be eligible for assistance. The remaining principal of the assessment

will be paid by CDBG; the owner is responsible for accrued interest.

**b. NEIGHBORHOOD STABILIZATION PROGRAM**

Staff attended the State of Illinois workshop on applying for NSP funds on 3/17. Applications are due on May 4, 2009; a team of Community Development staff is working on the application. Cook County has not released an RFP for their program. Staff continues to communicate with William Moore, who was hired in January to oversee the County's NSP and CDBG programs.

**c. AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT**

Staff attended a HUD meeting for recipients of **Homelessness Prevention and Rapid Re-Housing program (HPRP) funds** on 3/23. Evanston has been allocated \$801,460 on a formula basis to address the housing needs of people who are homeless or at high risk of becoming homeless. Funds are to be used to helping families with incomes at or below 50% of area median. Eligible activities include:

- Financial Assistance to pay for housing, or services designed to keep people in housing or find housing. This can take the form of short or medium term rental assistance (up to 3 months or 4-18 months, respectively), security and utility deposits, utility payments, moving assistance, motel & hotel vouchers.
- Housing Relocation and Stabilization Services such as case management, developing individual housing and service plans. Housing search and placement services, credit repair and legal services to help people stay in their homes *except that legal services relating to mortgages are not eligible*.
- Data collection for program reporting and evaluation are also eligible, including funds to support the use of the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS) for program reporting.
- Administrative Costs are capped at 5% of the total grant.

HPRP must be coordinated with the local Continuum of Care; coordination with existing Prevention program funded by the State is strongly encouraged. Staff attended a HUD-sponsored discussion of this program on March 23. Additional guidance from HUD on the use of funds is being developed. The City must file a substantial amendment to its Action Plan with HUD by May 18, 2009; HUD will approve plans by July 2 and agreements with subrecipients are to be signed by September 30, 2009. 60% of funds must be expended within two years and all funds within three years.

Regulations for **NSP II funds** that are part of ARRA have not been released; HUD plans to administer these funds directly through a competitive grant process, unlike NSP funds in HERA, which are being distributed on a formula basis.

The City has been allocated \$523,828 in **Community Development Block Grant (CDBG-R)** as part of ARRA. This is separate from 2009 CDBG entitlement funds appropriated in the Omnibus Funding Bill. HUD has submitted its recommendation for use of these funds to the White House and expects to have approval in the near future. The City will have to prepare a substantial amendment to its Action Plan regarding use of the funds. It is anticipated that emphasis will be on capital projects that can be underway rapidly (contracts within 120 days) and that create jobs.

Staff is meeting with Pat Vance, CEDA, to find out about additional **Weatherization funds** being released to the State of Illinois, as there is significant need in Evanston. CEDA has the contract for Weatherization in Cook County.

**d. 2009/10 GRANTS MANAGEMENT – PAYMENT PROCESS**

Staff provided a brief recap of the CDBG grants management and payment process. This information will be included in the AP&W package at the request of Ald. Rainey.

**VI. CITIZEN/STAFF COMMENT**

There was none.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 8:55pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Sarah K. Flax, CDBG Grants Administrator