



Community Development Subcommittee

Economic and Community Development Commission

Regular Meeting

August 27, 2014

The Community Development Subcommittee of the Economic and Community Development Commission conducted a regular meeting on Tuesday, August 27, 2014 in Room 104 of Stratford Town Hall, 2725 Main Street, Stratford, CT pursuant to a notice duly posted.

Members Present: Jason Santi, Fourth District Councilman, Subcommittee Chair; Brian Dempsey, Fifth District Councilman; and Stephanie Philips, Third District Councilman

Members Absent: None

Also Present: C. Duncan Yetman, Jr., Community Development Administrator

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Santi at 6:00 PM.

II. Review and Approval of Minutes of the Regular Meeting, July 22, 2014 and Special Meeting, July 28, 2014.

Because Ms. Philips was not present at the 7/28/14 special meeting, Mr. Santi entertained two separate motions to approve the minutes. Ms. Philips made a motion to approve the minutes of the 7/22/14 regular meeting as presented. Mr. Dempsey seconded and the motion was approved unanimously. Mr. Dempsey made a motion to approve the minutes of the 7/28/14 special meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Santi and approved unanimously.

III. Request by the Perry House Foundation, Inc.

Mr. Yetman reviewed the 8/11/14 letter from Dave Killeen, Chairman of the Perry House Foundation Board of Directors, requesting additional CDBG dollars for the project due to cost overruns. Mr. Killeen's request was for \$4,900, but Mr. Yetman noted that several of his administrative costs related to the original \$20,000 grant, including monitoring compliance with Davis-Bacon (prevailing wage) standards, have not been covered. He recommended a reallocation of \$6,000 from Stonybrook Gardens projects with \$3,000 of those dollars going toward his unreimbursed project administrative expenses and the remaining \$3,000 partially meeting the Perry House's current request.

After much discussion including a failed motion by one member to table the request, Mr. Santi entertained a motion to address the Perry House Foundation's

current request in full with an additional \$2,999 applied to Mr. Yetman's administrative costs by reallocating funding from the following projects:

- from Stonybrook Gardens Water Distribution System Replacement, CD Project #3709, \$2,633;
- from Sidewalk Improvements Project, CD Project #3813, \$2,633; and
- from Residential Rehabilitation Program, CD Project #3807, \$2,633.

Mr. Dempsey made the motion, Mr. Santi seconded, and the motion was approved 2-1 with Ms. Philips voting against the motion.

IV. Changes to Stratford's CDBG Low-Mod Areas

Mr. Yetman reviewed the memo he shared with the Mayor about how low-mod areas are determined and the recent changes to those areas. He noted that after receiving further policy guidance from HUD that the only immediate impact on the CDBG Program was the need to comply with the new areas with regard to the completion of sidewalks in the Sidewalk Improvements Project. Other 2014 activities are not in jeopardy as the service areas for those projects encompass more than one block group and by aggregating the block group low-mod data for each project's service area, all the service areas' low-mod percentages exceed the Town's upper quartile percentage of 43.16%.

Ms. Philips expressed the concern that the sidewalks she wanted to see completed on Sedgewick Avenue this fall would now not be done. Mr. Yetman said that he would work with Mr. Casey to ensure that, where possible, Town General Fund contract dollars would be prioritized for those streets that are now no longer CDBG-eligible. Ms. Philips asked about other types of projects. She questioned whether any proposed improvements to the Columbus Avenue tot lot, for instance, on the corner of Woodend Road and Columbus Avenue, would still be eligible.

Mr. Yetman said that it comes down to a question of service area. A facility like a tot lot probably has a service area that extends at least a quarter of a mile from its location. In the case of the Columbus Avenue tot lot, this would encompass the adjacent block group, which is one of the poorest in Stratford. The aggregated block groups have a low-mod percentage that exceeds the upper quartile percentage.

Ms. Philips was still concerned about the impact these changes would have on future projects. Mr. Yetman stated that the only way to challenge HUD on the designation of these areas is to conduct our own survey. HUD has guidelines for an acceptable survey methodology, sample size, etc. and Mr. Yetman estimated the cost of just a survey instrument alone to approach \$10,000. He said that the cost was prohibitive if CDBG dollars were the source as it would be considered a planning and administration activity and those costs are already maxed out.

After further discussion among the members, Ms. Philips made a motion to ask the Chairman to write a letter to the Mayor seeking General Fund dollars to conduct a survey. Mr. Dempsey seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Philips then left the meeting for another engagement.

V. Adjournment

After some further discussion about the changes in the low-mod block groups, Mr. Santi entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Dempsey made a motion, seconded by Mr. Santi and the meeting adjourned at 6:59 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "C. Duncan Yetman, Jr.", written in a cursive style.

C. Duncan Yetman, Jr.
Community Development Administrator