

**CITY OF URBANA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
Tuesday, June 26, 2001, Second Floor Conference Room
Minutes**

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, Chris Diana, Robert Lewis, Gigi Paquin, Anne Heinze Silvis, Dennis Vidoni

Commission Members Absent: Jon Liebman

Others Present: Bob Grewe, Connie Eldridge, Mike Loschen, and Karen Rasmussen, Community Development Services; Laurie Barbee, A Woman's Fund; Cathy Eastman, North Broadway Neighbors.

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m. A quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes: *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or corrections to the May 22, 2001 minutes. Commissioner Vidoni requested the following correction on page 2, third paragraph: "City Council inquired why funds remained in the Tenant Based Rent Assistance (TBRA) program." Commissioner Diana moved to approve the minutes as corrected. Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Staff Report: Mr. Grewe distributed the staff report and a chart on the Consolidated Social Service funding. After receiving information on other activities, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) indicated the Annual Action Plan was approvable.

The Committee of the Whole approved the release of liens for the property at 402 West Oregon Street. Commissioner Diana asked if the committee was concerned about the loss of housing units. Although there was no dialog on this, Mr. Grewe noted the mayor had suggested additional contract language concerning this unique situation.

Mr. Grewe discussed the significance of the new lead-based paint requirements. Staff has discussed liability issues with the Legal Department and is waiting to see how the requirements will affect rehabilitation costs. In conjunction with the City of Urbana and Village of Rantoul, the City of Champaign submitted a grant application to the State of Illinois Public Health Department for costs associated with lead-based paint.

At the HOME CHDO training workshop held in Urbana, Mr. Grewe noted the common concern was how to fund the various non-profit agencies with a limited amount of funds and how to structure those programs.

Mr. Grewe described the impact of the higher utility rates on the new rents provided by HUD for the Small Rental Properties Program (SRPP). In some cases, the tenant's rent has actually decreased.

Mr. Grewe summarized the survey results of the transitional housing providers for the Tenant Based Rent Assistance (TBRA) Program. Ms. Coleman has created a poster to educate both

transitional housing staff and clients about the TBRA program. Chairperson Cobb asked about changes to the TBRA Program. Mr. Grewe replied that staff would initiate additional one-to-one contact with transitional housing providers and conduct a workshop. If participation does not improve, the program will be re-evaluated.

Ms. Rasmussen noted the recent Supportive Housing Program workshop had two purposes: (1) the Center for Supportive Housing, which sponsored the workshop, asked attendees what assistance they needed to run the program, and (2) attendees discussed various supportive housing opportunities. The City of Urbana has offered supportive housing services since 1990, which made it the oldest participating community. She discussed the difference between eviction and termination from a supportive housing program.

Mr. Grewe announced the Urbana School District and the Illinois Center for Citizen Involvement (ICfCI) have agreed to exchange the property at 1105 North Harvey for another lot.

Mr. Grewe distributed a final summary on Spring 2001 Neighborhood Cleanup. In response to Chairperson Cobb, he discussed costs, volunteer availability, and police support.

Commissioner Diana asked what additional information the Department of HUD had requested on resale protocol. To receive downpayment assistance through the HOME program, Mr. Loschen explained both the sales agreement and the title work must contain a clause governing resale. The city must either recapture the funds or a low-income household must purchase the property. The City of Champaign needed to include this clause in its HOME downpayment assistance programs.

Petitions and Communications: None.

Old Business: None.

New Business: **Amendment to Agreement with Illinois Center for Citizen Involvement (ICfCI) for the completion of the Eads at Lincoln Subdivision** – Mr. Loschen distributed ICfCI’s original proposed budget for completion of the Eads at Lincoln Subdivision. The amendment allows for payment of site preparation, infrastructure development, and developers’ fees and also extends the agreement until June 30, 2002. Mr. Loschen reviewed progress toward the subdivision’s completion. Chairperson Cobb asked about the Urbana School District’s construction trades program. Mr. Loschen explained the City of Urbana has donated lots to this program in which the high students construct a house from the foundation up. Commissioner Diana questioned the phrase “miscellaneous developer’s fees” concerning allowable and not allowable expenses. He preferred specifying expenses. Discussion continued on the agreement’s wording. Mr. Loschen suggested referencing the original agreement with ICfCI. Commissioner Silvis suggested the term “other miscellaneous developer’s fees allowed by the original agreement.” Commissioners Diana and Lewis felt this was appropriate.

Commissioner Diana moved to recommend to City Council approval of the Amendment to the Agreement with Illinois Center for Citizen Involvement for the completion of the Eads at Lincoln Subdivision with the noted changes. Commissioner Lewis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Community Development Block Grant Public Service Subrecipient Agreements for FY2001-2002:

Neighborhood Organization Grant Program Agreements: Ms. Rasmussen noted these agreements are similar to those in past years. After distributing information on capacity building, she asked commissioners to consider how the program might be changed.

United Citizens and Neighbors: This is a capacity building project to acquire, rehabilitate and resell a low-income property. Both this agreement and UCAN's agreement under the capital improvement program will not take effect until the first rehabilitation project is completed.

North Broadway Neighbors: This new neighborhood organization is requesting startup funds. Cathy Eastman reviewed how this neighborhood organization began from city-sponsored meetings in the North Broadway area and how it differs from UCAN. She discussed concerns about city/county regulations, low real estate values, and neighborhood strengths. In response to Chairperson Cobb, she said the neighbors have not yet officially met as a group. Ms. Rasmussen added that staff is available to provide technical assistance. Also, the city's Planning Division hopes to use this organization as a resource during the development of the North Broadway Plan. Ms. Eastman noted that Bob Leach, president of UCAN, would also be a member of this group. She envisions partnering with Washington School to promote the neighborhood.

Commissioner Vidoni moved to recommend to the mayor approval of the Neighborhood Organization Grant Program Agreements for (1) United Citizens and Neighbors and (2) North Broadway Neighbors. Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Capital Improvement Program Agreements: Ms. Rasmussen discussed the following agreements.

United Citizens and Neighbors: This agreement provides funds for a second property acquisition, rehabilitation, and resale. Sale proceeds from the first property will be added to these funds to purchase a property.

Center for Women in Transition: This is the first year of a two-year commitment. The Center for Women in Transition is building a new facility on the lot between the Evans House and the Canaan Women's SAFE House. The first floor will be for education and meeting areas. The second floor will have four transitional housing units. Ms. Rasmussen discussed the need for transitional housing units and reviewed the second renewal of the Supportive Housing Program.

Developmental Services Center: This first-time grant will provide a door opener for the CU Independence Apartments.

Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois: Funds will be provided to repair only a portion of the roof. Planned Parenthood will contribute the balance of repair costs.

Concerning the Center for Women in Transition, Commissioner Diana inquired about the entire budget. Ms. Rasmussen said the budget has yet to be determined; however, their history of fundraising is positive. She will not contribute funds for any projects until agencies provide copies of the winning bid, contract and a budget indicating the other funding sources. CDBG funds may be used for leverage of viable projects. Discussion continued on the location and type of building. In response to Commissioner Diana, Ms. Rasmussen stated all Center for Women in Transition units are held to affordable housing standards.

Chairperson Cobb remarked these projects will definitely benefit the community.

Commissioner Diana asked about funding for Planned Parenthood. Ms. Rasmussen replied the CDBG funds are to repair the structure while Consolidated Social Service Funds are for a program. Discussion continued on funding sources.

Commissioner Diana moved to recommend to City Council approval of the CDBG Capital Improvement Program Agreements for (1) United Citizens and Neighbors, (2) Center for Women in Transition, (3) Developmental Services Center, and (4) Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois. Commissioner Paquin seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Urban League of Champaign County: Ms. Rasmussen noted the City of Urbana has funded this exterior house painting program for several years. There are two changes: increased funding and inclusion of siding repair and replacement. The program is available to income-eligible households throughout the city. Commissioner Vidoni inquired about program availability outside of the Community Development (CD) Target Area. Ms. Rasmussen explained 70 percent of funding must benefit low/moderate income persons. Although strategies in the Consolidated Plan focus on the CD Target Area, certain programs are not restricted to the target area. Commissioner Lewis asked about lead paint hazard reduction activities, and Commissioner Diana questioned the installation of siding over lead-based paint. Staff will address the lead based paint issues.

Commissioner Paquin moved to recommend to the mayor approval of the CDBG Capital Improvement Program Agreement for Urban League of Champaign County. Commissioner Diana seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Social Service Funding Projects Amendment to Annual Action Plan FY2001-2002: Ms. Rasmussen introduced Laurie Barbee, fiscal officer for A Woman's Fund. A Woman's Place is part of the Supportive Housing Program and will also receive Consolidated Social Service funding.

Ms. Rasmussen stated that City Council and Cunningham Township Board determined who would be funded, the amount of funding, and the funding source. They considered the priorities set by the Community Development Commission. Ms. Rasmussen summarized the following projects:

Children's Home and Aid Society (CHASI) of Illinois – Vis a Vis and Partners: Because CHASI did not get the full amount of requested funding, the agency requested \$10,000 be assigned to the Partners salaried position and \$1,000 toward a staff position at Vis a Vis.

El Centro por los Trabajadores – Rent Assistance: Ms. Rasmussen reviewed HUD’s concerns with eligibility. The agreement requires participants be eligible based on income and Urbana residence. Also the agency is to use apartments in Urbana. She discussed rental assistance to avoid eviction.

Lakeside Terrace Residents Council – Landscaping Project: This agency did not receive the full amount of funding to implement their plans. Instead the funds will be used for playground equipment.

Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois – LEADERS: The City of Urbana and Cunningham Township have historically funded this program. FY2001-2001 is the first year of CDBG funding for this mentoring program at Urbana Middle School.

Urban League of Champaign County – Transitional Employment Program: This is an employment program for persons leaving penal institutions. It is based at the halfway house on North Cunningham. This program, which has been funded in the past, received reduced funding.

Urban League of Champaign County – Summer Youth Employment Program: Urban League plans to fund employment of six youth. This program received the same amount of funding as in past years.

Urbana Park District – Youth Scholarships: For many years the City of Urbana has funded this program, which has expanded beyond King Park Camp. Last year these funds were added to other funding to provide scholarships for 26 children for summer activities.

Commissioner Lewis inquired about eligible/ineligible criteria to address concerns for funding projects in a church-owned facility. Ms. Rasmussen said there were faith-based initiatives for mentoring programs and computer literacy. Those projects are being funded by the city’s general funds or by Cunningham Township. Ms. Rasmussen reviewed the federal approach to the faith-based initiatives. Current regulations allow the secular corporation related to a faith-based organization to receive funding. Staff reviews activities in faith-based organizations to determine that religious affiliation is not required for participation. Discussion continued on the pros and cons of funding faith-based organizations. The Department of Housing and Urban Development favors funding faith-based organizations.

Commissioner Vidoni left the meeting at 8:35.

Chairperson Cobb stated he was familiar with the Urban League’s Transitional Employment Program (TEP). He suggested providing TEP with additional funds and reducing the amount of funding for Planned Parenthood’s LEADERS Program. Ms. Rasmussen suggested he contact City Council members. She noted City Council uses social service funding as a contribution to an agency’s overall expenses. Because City Council determined the agencies to receive CDBG public service funding, no changes could be made. At this point the CD Commission is recommending the actual agreements, not the programs and the amount of funding. Attachment C, Statement of Special Conditions, specifically outlines how the monies will be expended. Discussion continued on CDBG regulations governing eligible/ineligible funding. Commissioner Diana was concerned that Planned Parenthood’s agreement indicates “serving 10

peer educators” rather than the number of children. Ms. Rasmussen described how staff would monitor these projects. Commissioner Diana felt this was appropriate.

In response to Chairperson Cobb, Ms. Rasmussen explained the agreements are for CD Commission review and comment. Commissioner Lewis was concerned with the social service funding process. Commissioner Diana wondered what was the role of staff and the city’s commissions in determining which agencies get funded. Ms. Rasmussen replied that City Council does consider the funding priorities set by the CD Commission.

Chairperson Cobb inquired how Social Service Consolidated Funds were divided among the agencies. Ms. Rasmussen explained the funding process. Noting the reduced amount of funding, Chairperson Cobb felt the Urban League’s Transitional Employment Program (TEP) should have received more funding. He believed this program was more valuable to the community than other programs that received more funding. Ms. Rasmussen suggested that next fiscal year the CD Commission consider job training as a separate program under economic development.

Commissioner Lewis asked if there was a more analytical way to assess the different social service programs. Ms. Rasmussen discussed the different funding sources and their requirements. She reviewed what was accomplished and who was served only for applications using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Commissioner Lewis believed City Council needed to look more closely at the social service programs and assess the nature of the issues. Chairperson Cobb and Commissioner Diana agreed. Commissioner Diana noted the CD Commission is approving the technical wording of the agreements, not the funding amounts. Discussion continued on how to let City Council know about commissioners concerns.

Commissioner Lewis moved to recommend to the mayor approval of the technical merits of the following Consolidated Social Service Agreements:

- *Children’s Home and Aid Society of Illinois – Vis a Vis and Partners*
- *El Centro por los Trabajadores – Rent Assistance*
- *Lakeside Terrace Residents Council – Landscaping Project*
- *Planned Parenthood of East Central Illinois – LEADERS*
- *Urban League of Champaign County – Transitional Employment Program*
- *Urban League of Champaign County – Summer Youth Employment Program*
- *Urbana Park District – Youth Scholarships*

The Community Development Commission approved the adherence to the regulations in the proposed Social Service Funding Projects Amendment to Annual Action Plan FY2001-2002. However, the Community Development Commission took exception (1) to the process by which the agreements were brought to the Commission and (2) to the subsequent allocation of funding related to the significance of programs in compliance with the Annual Action Plan.

Commissioner Silvis seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

There was discussion about scheduling a review of the Neighborhood Organization Grant program.

Commissioner Lewis requested the CD Commission revisit the criteria used to determine compliance with the Annual Action Plan for all programs. He preferred the language to be more specific than general. Commissioner Diana requested that agencies provide performance data in

their funding applications. Ms. Rasmussen suggested a pre-application workshop to review criteria and requirements. Commissioner Lewis preferred the agencies provide statistics. Ms. Rasmussen proposed that the community's funding agencies create a standardized report. Commissioner Lewis felt agencies should provide information on number of participants, staff members, salary ranges, etc. Ms. Rasmussen discussed the agencies concerns with public knowledge.

Adjournment: Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 9:12 p.m.

Recorded by Connie Eldridge

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