



APPROVED by CD Commission 2/26/13
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, January 22, 2013, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Call to Order: Chairperson Cobb called the meeting to order at 7:08 p.m.

Roll Call: Connie Eldridge called the roll. A quorum was present.

Commission Members Present: Fred Cobb, Janice Bengtson, Chris Diana, Jerry Moreland, Brad Roof, Anne Heinze Silvis

Commission Members Absent: George Francis, Gregory Hayes

Others Present: Kelly H. Mierkowski and Connie Eldridge, Community Development Services; Bishop King James Underwood, Samuel Johnson, Franki M. Johnson.

Approval of Minutes: *Chairperson Cobb asked for approval or corrections to the November 27, 2012 minutes. Commissioner Silvis moved to approve the minutes, and Commissioner Bengtson seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.*

Petitions and Communications: Bishop King James Underwood asked if there were any grants to help update the sewer infrastructure in the Dr. Ellis Subdivision (see attached request). Some residents are having problems with tree roots in their sewer lines. Because the lateral main sewer is on the north side of the street, any repair or replacement on the south side must cross under the street and into the other neighbor's yard. The street may need to be torn up, and the homeowner must pay for all costs. He felt it was unfair that all properties do not have equal access to the main sewer. Because homeowners are still having issues, Bishop Underwood has approached the City to request help.

Kelly Mierkowski reviewed the housing rehabilitation programs currently available with the City of Urbana. Those programs are not designed to address major sewer repairs. Commissioner Roof inquired about using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) public facility funds for sewer infrastructure projects. Ms. Mierkowski will review Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regulations and contact the Public Works Department regarding this. Commissioner Moreland wanted staff to expedite this and contact the affected residents soon. Ms. Mierkowski noted that the issue of sewer line placement was not unique to Dr. Ellis Subdivision but was throughout the City.

Commissioner Diana asked if the subdivision had a neighborhood association, and Bishop Underwood answered no. There was discussion on past Neighborhood Organization Grants (NOG) and CDBG public facility infrastructure projects. Commissioner Silvis stated the Public Works Department issues a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP), and they would be knowledgeable about sewer issues.

Samuel Johnson remarked that he was a City employee when the sewer lines were installed in the 1960s. Noting there have been on-going problems since 1967, he felt the work was not done well. He mentioned issues with quicksand and problems with individual sewer lines tapping into the main sewer. His suggestion was to run an additional new main sewer line on the opposite side of the street from the current main. He was concerned that the neighborhood residents, many of whom are elderly or lower income, could not afford sewer line repairs or replacement of very long sewer lines.

Ms. Mierkowski will research this issue, report to the Community Development (CD) Commission, and contact the residents.

Staff Report: Ms. Mierkowski reviewed the staff briefing memorandum dated January 22, 2013. The City submitted its response to HUD regarding the City's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report (CAPER). Staff held public hearings on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2013-2013 Annual Action Plan during January 7-10, 2013 at different sites. Ms. Mierkowski announced that Connie Eldridge, Grants Management Division's (GMD) administrative assistant, was retiring on January 28. Due to anticipated federal budget cuts, GMD is waiting until the next fiscal year to see if there will be funds to hire a part-time replacement.

In response to Commissioner Moreland, Ms. Mierkowski distributed the City of Urbana's Home Improvement Programs flyer and reviewed those programs and the Whole House Rehabilitation Program. Commissioners Roof and Diana discussed sewer repair, reinforcement, and costs to install a new sewer line. Commissioner Diana noted the angles of some sewer lines may not allow preventative measures. Referencing a streetlight project initiated by residents in his neighborhood, Commissioner Roof encouraged these residents to be persistent.

Bishop Underwood stated the City code indicates the homeowner is responsible for the cost of repairing or installing a sewer line from the house to the main sewer. Commissioner Moreland questioned how the City could justify this ordinance. Chairperson Cobb said probably no one had opposed this or raised a serious concern. In response to Commissioner Moreland, Mr. Johnson described the boundaries of the affected neighborhood.

Old Business: None.

New Business: **An Ordinance Approving a Second Amendment to the City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium Annual Action Plans FY 2011-2012 and FY 2012-2013 (Winter 012 CDBG Amendment)** – Ms. Mierkowski stated the amendment proposes to reallocate "Property Acquisition Demolition" funds (including carryover from previous years) and combine them with unprogrammed funds to "City Infrastructure Projects." The amendment also renames a Public Facilities and Improvements Project from "Neighborhood Sidewalks" to the "Lanore/Adams/Fairlawn Multi-Use Path."

The amendments were initiated at the request of the City. Ms. Mierkowski reviewed the eligible projects listed in the AAP and worked with staff to locate all possible carryover and unprogrammed funds. It was determined the Census Tract 53 Street Lighting project was an

eligible project. Using CDBG funds would then free up City funds for other City projects. Because of the change of scope and dollar amount, AAP amendments were required. This would also help with the timely expenditure of CDBG funds.

In response to Chairperson Cobb and Commissioner Bengtson, Ms. Mierkowski explained that funds were already in place for Neighborhood Sidewalks. The amendment changes the scope of work and increases the funding. The multi-use path would be used by pedestrians and bicyclists and also includes new lighting. Many persons already cut through this area on their way to Philo Road.

Commissioner Roof questioned the repurposing of the CDBG funds to displace current City funds. Ms. Mierkowski clarified the CT53 Street Lighting project, which includes City and Tax Increment Finance (TIF) funds, will cost approximately \$1,000,000 or less. The City is using unprogrammed and carryover CDBG funds for only a portion of this project. Chairperson Cobb agreed the City had to have a purpose in mind for this request concerning the City funds. Commissioner Roof stated without knowing the City's plans for the funds, he could not approve the amendment.

While he agreed the CDBG funds were being allocated into an approved project, Commissioner Diana shared the same concern. He questioned why CDBG funds were being used for this particular project rather than Property Acquisition Demolition or another program. He was concerned this would diminish funds for property acquisition next year.

Commissioner Silvis inquired if the budget for the Census Tract 53 Street Lighting project was short of funds. Commissioners Diana and Roof noted the City is trying to free up City money. Mr. Johnson wondered why the City did not use funds from other projects to help Dr. Ellis subdivision with its sewer issues.

Chairperson Cobb asked about timeframes for using the CDBG and City funds. Ms. Mierkowski replied the Lanore/Adams/Fairlawn Multi-Use Path was on Monday night's City Council agenda, and the project would start soon. Public Works is still working on the bid packet for the CT53 Street Lighting project. Commissioner Diana believed these projects would still be done, regardless of funding. Ms. Mierkowski clarified the Lanore/Adams/Fairlawn Multi-Use Path was completely funded by CDBG.

Commissioner Silvis asked where the path was located. There was discussion on its location. Connie Eldridge mentioned that a citizen's annual request for this sidewalk has been included in the last several Annual Action Plans. Commissioner Moreland felt it was more important to use funds for the sewer issues rather than the multi-use path.

Referencing the fiscal impacts paragraph in the memorandum, Chairperson Cobb disagreed with the wording. He stated there was a fiscal impact to the City budget.

Commissioner Roof moved that the CD Commission not recommend approval to City Council of an Ordinance Approving a Second Amendment to the City of Urbana and Urbana HOME Consortium Annual Action Plans FY 2011-2012 and FY 2012-2013 (Winter 012 CDBG Amendment).

Since the City requested this action, there should be an explanation on how the City funds would be used. Commissioner Bengtson seconded the motion. Commissioner Diana noted the fiscal impact statement in the memorandum was not entirely correct. If approved, there would be no fiscal impact. If not approved, there would be an adjustment of \$175,000. The motion carried unanimously.

Adjournment: Chairperson Cobb adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

Recorded by Connie Eldridge

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Attachment: Request from Bishop King James Underwood and Dr. Ellis Subdivision Homeowners/Residents dated January 22, 2013

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