

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager

Michael E. Traynor
Chief Development Officer
Executive Office of Economic Development



Gregory J. Baker, Director
Neighborhood Development Division

**Community Development Advisory Committee
City Hall, Room 401
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA
Tuesday, February 24, 2015
6:30 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

CDAC present: Edward Moynihan (Chair), Mark Borenstein (Vice Chair), Martha Assefa, Etel Capacchione, Tracey Pakstis-Claiborne, Dana Strong, Paula Stuart, Daniel J. Whalen

CDAC absent: Michael Larkin, Matthew Yalouris

City Staff: Greg Baker, Stephen Connelly, Steve Hill, Jeanette Roach

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Moynihan at 6:37 P.M.

2) Review and Approval of 02/03/15 Minutes

There were no changes suggested to the 02/10/15 CDAC meeting minutes, and a motion was seconded and passed to vote for their approval.

3) Discussion of Chair's Draft Proposal for CDAC Oversight & Input Related to Housing Development Division Programs

Ed Moynihan recapped the new housing project application process for Program Year 41, and beyond, wherein the City of Worcester will employ a rolling application model to provide developers and homeowners with access to CDBG funds to finance housing development and improvement projects. He noted that this change streamlines the application and funding process to mirror the real time planning and development that these projects often require, but it also requires that CDAC revisit how they will engage in housing project input short of evaluating each actual project as had been done in the past. The following proposal to preserve CDAC review was put forth:

1. Twice a fiscal year (July 1 to June 30), the Director of the Housing Development Division will deliver a report and briefing to the CDAC membership detailing information on applications received and projects for Owner Occupied Rehab, Rental Rehab and Down Payment Assistance. The briefings will occur on or before June 7, and on or before November 7, starting in 2015. The reports will include name of project, project applicants, a brief summary of the projects, and the City's determination to support or not support the project proposals.
2. The Director of the Housing Division will also include status reports for the CDAC detailing how far along funded projects are on their way to completion, reasons for any delays, and any changes that have been approved in the project.
3. The reports will be delivered to the committee at least one week prior to each of the aforementioned twice annual briefings by the Housing Development Division Director to CDAC.

CDAC members generally agreed with the proposal.

It was noted that the November meeting may have to occur on a Wednesday because Election Day and Veteran's Day both fall on a Tuesday in November.

Ed Moynihan made a motion to accept the proposal which was seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

4) Discussion of CDAC Representation Concerns for District 2

City staff and CDAC members discussed concerns about a CDAC member representing District 2 who has had more than six consecutive unexcused absences. It was noted that these absences are adversely impacting CDAC representation for the District, and attempts by both the CDAC Chair and City staff to communicate with the member have resulted in very few responses.

The discussion focused on how CDAC will address their concerns with the CDAC member in relation to the policy indicated by the City of Worcester Revised Ordinances of 2008 (§ 23. Vacancy in Offices):

When a member of a board or commission or committee has been absent from three or more consecutive meetings, without proper explanation, and such absence has been determined by the remaining members of such board, commission or committee to interfere in the effective discharge of its duties, the chair, upon the vote of the members, shall inform the city manager of such absence. Upon receipt of such notice, the city manager shall take steps to remove such individual from office and to fill such vacancy in the manner provided for in the original election or appointment to such office.

CDAC members expressed a desire to recognize the CDAC member's contributions to the committee and to make one final attempt to reach him. It was decided that the Chair, Ed Moynihan, will reach out to the member through phone and e-mail and ask for a response by 2/28/15. If there is no response, it will be assumed that the member has no interest in continuing to fulfill his obligations on CDAC, and a formal vote will be put on the CDAC agenda for 3/3/15 to notify the City Manager of the member's absence, and CDAC's desire to re-fill the position.

5) Review of CDAC's Cumulative RFP Evaluation Scores

A CDBG Year 41 (July 2015 - June 2016) Applicant Review spreadsheet with CDAC's cumulative RFP evaluation scores was distributed to CDAC members. Members were asked to review their individual scores for accuracy, and there was discussion with regard to the final ranking of applications.

It was generally agreed that the scores represent community needs well and reflect the quality of each application and its intended activity or emphasis.

Next steps for the CDBG Year 41 allocation process were outlined:

- The CDAC Chairperson will draft a letter on behalf of the CDAC to the Worcester City Manager by 3/3/15. This letter will present their findings and scoring recommendations under this year's process.
- Neighborhood Development Division staff will complete evaluations of the applications, in conjunction with other City staff, for CDBG eligibility and ability to meet Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) requirements.
- Final CDBG Year 41 recommendations will be submitted to the City Council through the City Manager by late March / early April 2015.

6) Discussion of Elements of CDAC's Draft Letter to City Manager

CDAC Chair, Ed Moynihan, briefed CDAC members on the letter submitted to the City Manager for Year 40, and highlighted its emphasis on CDAC's consistent efforts to find ways to improve. There was discussion with regard to elements that should be contained in the draft letter for Year 41, and the following items were put forth in the discussion:

- The proposed new method of advisement and input related to Housing Development Division Programs.
- Acknowledgment that the use of the revised scoring sheet and proposal ranking system minimized the subjectivity of rating applications.
- Recognition that CDAC evaluated applications conscientiously and diligently.
- Potential changes in the RFP scoring rubric for non-Public Services applications (i.e. Public Facility and/or Interdepartmental applications).
- Alternative methods for community outreach to gain input on community needs, such as use of technology (social media, etc.).
- An additional category for the RFP scoring rubric that allows for individual CDAC members to score applications based upon their respective neighborhoods. It was stated in response that this has the potential to lead to parochialism, and that CDAC's strength stems in part from representing the city as a whole.

Neighborhood Development Division Director, Greg Baker, suggested that the letter to the City Manager include the following:

- Results of the Year 41 CDAC CDBG scoring / ranking system.
- A description of the Year 41 CDBG recommendations process, including the review of applications and scoring of RFP's.

- Global themes that emerged through the process, such as commonalities among the community needs addressed by higher ranked proposals.
- Themes related to proposals with lower scores.

7) Adjournment

As there were no more items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:45 PM.