

City of Worcester, Massachusetts

Edward M. Augustus, Jr.
City Manager

Michael E. Traynor
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Gregory J. Baker, Director
Neighborhood Development Division

**Community Development Advisory Committee
City Hall, Room 401
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA
Tuesday, November 24, 2015
6:00 PM**

MEETING MINUTES

CDAC present: Edward Moynihan (Chair), Mark Borenstein (Vice Chair), Ariel Lim, Martha Assefa, Etel Capacchione, Tracey Pakstis, Paula Stuart, Daniel Whalen

CDAC absent: Dana Strong, Matthew Yalouris

City Staff: Gregory Baker, Stephen Hill, Anthony Miloski

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Ed Moynihan at 6:00 P.M.

2) Review and Approval of 11/10/15 CDAC Meeting Minutes

With the exception of the agreed need to correct of Mark Borenstein's name which had been incorrectly written as Matt Borenstein in section 5, there were no other changes suggested to the 11/10/15 CDAC meeting minutes, and a motion was seconded and passed to vote for their approval.

3) Election of CDAC Chair & Vice Chair and assignment of Recorder

CDAC members accepted the nomination of and voted to make Edward Moynihan Chair.

CDAC members accepted the nomination of and voted to make Mark Borenstein Vice Chair.

CDAC members accepted the nomination of and voted approval of Ariel Lim as Recorder.

4) Review of updated/final schedule for Year 42 CDBG / CDAC meetings

There was discussion among CDAC members and City staff regarding the “City of Worcester Year 42 / FY 2017 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Annual Action Plan Request for Proposals & Community Development Advisory Committee (CDAC) Schedule” which had been distributed to all.

There was considerable discussion with regard to the proposed public hearing time. It was agreed that the time should be moved to 5:30 PM given that several CDAC members had concerns that the proposed 3:00 PM time was too early and would be inconvenient for most of the general public.

CDAC members thought that the City should do more this year to promote the public hearing regarding community needs in order to increase public participation. They suggested use of social media (such as Twitter and Facebook) and perhaps the City’s Economic Development newsletter to promote the public hearing. They favored having the public hearing filmed and archived for future reference. Greg Baker said that the format of the public hearing was still to be determined, but that in the past the City’s website had been used for advertising the hearing and that filming would be difficult given that the format would likely consist of facilitated input at different “break out” tables, and not follow a format of individual input at a stationary mic and podium, therefore sound recording of the proceedings might be difficult. He also reminded CDAC members that the City had just gone through extensive community needs analyses in 2014-15 which included 9 community-based public input public meetings held in every City Council District as part of the process to develop a new Five Year (2015-20) Consolidated Plan. That input was also in addition to numerous non-profit and institutional service provider meetings that were held in 2014-15 as part of the consolidated plan process.

Some CDAC members said that they had not been informed during the last annual CDBG and CDAC cycle of the City’s final funding recommendations and of the time of the City Council’s subcommittee review process, which occurs after CDAC’s role in the CDBG allocation process is finalized. City staff agreed to make stronger efforts to keep CDAC members informed of the City’s proposed recommendations and of the time of the final City Council subcommittee deliberations. There was a sentiment among some CDAC members to have the City Council’s subcommittee review meeting serve as the City’s second HUD mandated CDBG public hearing (which would represent a return to the format that had been used prior to the 2013-14 CDBG year). It was recognized that while CDAC members were welcome to attend the City Council subcommittee meeting, it was the responsibility of the Chair and/or Vice Chair of CDAC, per their defined roles and responsibilities, to attend that meeting and speak on behalf of the CDAC, as well as inform the CDAC members of the results or deliberations.

CDAC members also discussed the mandatory RFP applicant presentation session. CDAC members felt the possibility of having the RFP presentations being made over two nights if a large number of RFP’s were to be received was preferable to a one night session.

In light of the CDAC vacancy for District 2, and the unsure active participation of another current committee member, the importance of having members commit themselves to the proposed schedule of meetings was stressed by City staff. Full participation will be required for meeting quorums at each meeting.

5) Review Year 42 Request for Proposals (RFP) and updates/changes to RFP Guide and scoring metrics

Greg Baker guided the CDAC through several updates and changes made to the draft “Fiscal Year 2017 Community Development Block Grant Request for Proposals” document that had been distributed to all committee members. Many of the changes consisted of updating and improving the wording of questions in the Public Services portion of the document, as well as significantly updating the Public Facilities & Improvements section to include a project due diligence checklist, as well as more detailed narrative response requirements. Greg Baker also explained the need to upgrade the RFP in light of changes mandated under the recently adopted 2 CFR 200, Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (also referred to as the “Super Circular”). Pending official guidance from HUD on the matter, the Neighborhood Development Division worked with the City’s Law Department in 2015 to make changes to Subrecipient contracts relevant to 2 CFR 200. Language from some of the contracts relevant to 2 CFR 200 are now incorporated into the draft RFP document. Greg Baker also informed CDAC that the City will now likely be required to conduct official Risk Assessments before making CDBG awards, as well as develop Subrecipient Monitoring Plans for CDBG Subrecipients as a result of the 2 CFR 200, but staff that was still getting up to speed on the new federal grant requirements.

It was also discussed that a brief guide to the RFP for potential applicants would be amended and updated so that applicants would realize the actual scoring system that CDAC uses for scoring applications, as well as tips for making stronger applications, and other factors used in making program award and allocation decisions.

It was confirmed that the 200 page word limit listed in Part IV, Public Services, would pertain to each question and not to all the questions taken together. Some CDAC members recommended that the 200 word limit should be strictly enforced.

CDAC members expressed interest in moving towards a “paperless” RFP scoring system. They suggested the use of fillable PDF documents to score and tabulate the RFPs. Greg Baker said his staff would look into making these changes.

The Goals and Objectives laid out in a 10-page document called “SP-45 Goals Summary – 91.215(a)(4)” which had been taken from the City’s new Five-Year (2015-20) Consolidated Plan, was distributed to the committee for their review and discussion.

6) Adjournment

As there were no more items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:22 PM.