

Community Development Advisory Committee
12/05/2019
Worcester City Hall Room 401
455 Main Street
Worcester, MA
6:00 PM

MEETING MINUTES

CDAC present: Paula Stuart (Chair), Doug Arbetter (Vice Chair), Michael Murphy, Arline Rosario, Dana Strong, Pamela Stolz

CDAC absent: Suzanne Graham Anderson

City staff: Greg Baker, Sandy Amoakohene, Devorah Lipschitz

1) Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Paula Stuart at 6:05 PM. The following items had been distributed to each CDAC member at the start of the meeting:

- Agenda
- Minutes from 05/23/2019
- CDAC information sheet, including definition, committee functions, and membership for 2018-2019 by district
- Terms and responsibilities of elected and appointed CDAC positions
- Five-Year Consolidated Plan 2020-2025 Community Input Meetings flyer and agenda
- Five-Year Consolidated Plan 2020-2025 Community Input Meetings summary presentation
- Public Services CDBG allocations by category action plan years 1-5 for 2015-2020

Tonight's meeting was filmed and can be viewed at the following link:

<http://view.earthchannel.com/PlayerController.aspx?PGD=worcema&eId=2029>

2) Review and Approval of 3/28/2019 meeting minutes (vote needed)

A motion was seconded and passed to vote approval of the 05/23/2019 minutes. CDAC voted 6-0 in approval.

3) Update on Current Status of CDAC Membership

Sandy Amoakohene updated the committee on the current status of CDAC membership and the ongoing search for members from City Council districts one (1), three (3) and four (4). Each of the aforementioned districts have one (1) committee seat vacancy, with two interviews for potential candidates from districts 1 and 4 expected to occur soon.

In response to a question from Chairperson Paula Stuart, Sandy explained that she had presented at the last CAC meeting on the committee vacancies that we have. CAC referred 3 potential candidates, and one person declined. The other two are being interviewed.

Greg Baker reminded the committee that he authorized a re-broadcasting of a prior PSA advertising committee vacancies on the City of Worcester cable channel, and that an updated flyer was being circulated through the library and local venues such as coffee shops and schools as well as the City's social media accounts and neighborhood associations in order to try and recruit new members.

4) Election of new Officers, Chair, and Vice Chair, and appointment of Recorder

Chairperson Paula Stuart announced that her two-year term as Chairperson has concluded and opened up the floor to nominations for new Chairperson. Vice Chairperson Doug Arbetter was nominated for the position and elected through a 6-0 vote.

Chairperson Doug Arbetter immediately took his new seat and opened up the floor to vote for a new Vice Chairperson. Arline Rosario and Michael Murphy were nominated for the position. Arline Rosario declined the nomination. Michael Murphy accepted the nomination and was elected in a 6-0 vote.

Pamela Stolz volunteered to be the Recorder.

5) Update on the Five (5) Year consolidated Plan (2020-2025) Community Needs Outreach Process

a. Summary of neighborhood/public input meeting results

Greg Baker gave a brief overview, explaining that as part of the community outreach process, a series of ten (10) community input meetings were held from 06/20/2019 – 10/10/2019 with at least one in every City Council district. The meetings were designed to receive feedback on community needs by using a facilitated process in which meeting participants were split up into groups and presented with a standardized set of questions and, in some cases, response choices. The findings of these meetings are meant to help the committee reassess community needs in order to properly allocate RFP funds.

Greg Baker went on to present the findings of the Community Needs Outreach Process:

- What people like most about their neighborhoods - parks and recreation facilities, centrally located, calm and quiet
- Top neighborhood issues – poor conditions of roads and sidewalks, crime, illegal activity, safety issues
 - High crime more details – drug, property crime, need for increased police presence, pedestrian safety
- Housing – exterior improvements and HVAC (heating and cooling)
- Types of housing – elder/senior and handicap accessible, 2-3 bedroom units
- Social and human services/ public services 15% annual contribution - job readiness and job training, transportation, healthcare
- Case management is separate from information and referral. We call some past supported activities case management, but in reality it is more akin to information and referral. Case management should be 1 on 1 assistance to achieve self-sufficiency. Information and referral redirects people to where they can find help and/or assists them immediately with a basic need.

6) Briefing on Anticipated FY20 RFP Schedule and Programmatic/Funding Changes

Greg Baker reviewed the prior CDBG allocations over the past five years by category. Transportation and job preparation and training were two of the most underrepresented services and he suggested that going forward the City would be further supporting those two areas of community need, and perhaps also focusing on nonprofits that are providing more intensive case management services. He stated that this would be in response to what was learned at the neighborhood and community meetings for public input that were held between the spring and fall of 2020.

There was also a discussion on giving more weight to nonprofits who link jobs and transportation services, as they seem to be a growing set of community needs that are interrelated.

Chairperson Doug Arbetter inquired about CDBG funds being used to contribute towards a free transit system, which launched a conversation about transportation needs of low to moderate income residents. CDBG funds may be used to support non-profits who are providing transportation services such as bus passes and rideshare service vouchers.

The committee discussed ways to decide how to fund certain CDBG needs. In previous years, non-profits would be awarded funds based on a point system that committee members utilized in order to rank activities in part on how useful their services were to addressing low-moderate income resident needs. Greg Baker proposed prioritizing non-profits who will address some of the top three community needs as most recently identified, including: jobs, transportation, and self-sufficiency focused case management services.

The committee discussed scheduling for the RFP. Greg said the City was hoping to release it around January 13th and suggested the committee not meet again until the RFP comes back. Greg stated he would send a CDAC meeting schedule after the RFP release and return dates had been firmly established.

7) Adjournment

Prior to Adjournment, the committee agreed that upcoming meetings would take place on Thursdays at 6pm.

As there were no more items for discussion, the meeting adjourned at 7:04 PM.