

Community Development Board
Meeting Minutes
April 5, 2011
9:00 a.m., 4th Floor Large Conference Room,
Parmly Billings Library
510 N. Broadway, Billings, Montana

Board Members Present: Jim Hartung, Patt Leikam, David Goodridge, Kamber Kelly, Kathleen Candelaria, and Emily Shaffer

Board Members Excused: Tom Mahlen

Staff Present: Brenda Beckett, Dina Billington, Casey Brown, Jill Bunge, Hanna Noel, Daniele Reisbig, Lynda Woods, and Doris Cole

Welcome / Introduction / Announcements: The meeting was called to order at 9:00 a.m. by Jim Hartung, chair, and roll call was taken. Hartung commented on the P.A.T.H. program that was featured in the Billings Gazette on Monday, April 4th, and an event that happened the same day. He had spoken to Carmen Gonzalez from the HUB who stated that a Navy veteran was waiting at the HUB when it opened with the news article in his hand. He stated that, due to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), things have gotten really hard and he was about to “check out”. Then he read the article in the newspaper. By the time he left the HUB, he was in the VASH housing program and had decided to stick around and not end his life.

Public Comment: None.

Meeting Minutes: *Dave Goodridge moved that the minutes of March 1st and March 17th be approved as presented. Kamber Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.*

Staff Reports: Brenda Beckett discussed the budget cuts before Congress and explained that it is difficult to set up a budget when Congress is still negotiating. She stated that the Community Development Board would be working off a budget cut of 7.5% for CDBG and a 10% for HOME funding for Fiscal Year 2011-2012, per the President’s predictions as “best case scenarios”. She noted that staff priorities are Housing Rehab and affordable housing development, specifically to finish Phase IV of the King’s Green Project. She then reported that the Neighborhood Stabilization Project homes are almost completed and should be ready for sale this summer.

Lynda Woods announced that the Adjacent Neighborhood Committee will be meeting Thursday, April 7th, at 4:00 p.m. She reported that the Mayor’s Committee met on March 10th and that their next meeting will be May 12th. They are working on holding a roundtable discussion on homeless youth, which is the largest gap in services that we have. Housing Rehab is 83% committed. Minor Home Repair is 36% committed and Paint is 69% committed. She also noted that lots of applications are coming in for all programs. The major interest right now is in Minor Home Repair but, because of the changes to the program, most applicants are not eligible for the program.

Dina Billington noted that she attended a Uniform Relocation Act training in Minneapolis in March. This training dealt with tenants and owners who are displaced and relocated due to purchasing of property utilizing federal funds. She also reported that the First Time Home Buyer Program is 100% committed.

Casey Brown reported that she has been compiling a survey and database for the Housing Rehab program. She is also taking an Excel class and has been updating program brochures. She will also be interviewing Robin Hanel about loans available to first time home buyers.

Hanna Noel discussed the progress being made on the Salvation Army / School District No. 2 Summer Garden project. She and Jill visited the schools, teachers, and principals to discuss how they want to be involved. They talked to the kids about the seed starts project in an attempt to get them excited about hands on growing of their own food. She noted that they are looking for volunteers and also noted that the Youth Volunteer Corps from United Way has committed to two weeks of volunteering to the project.

Jill Bunge discussed Volunteers of America's Independence Hall garden project and noted that they have a garden committee in place. This project is considered part of their recreational therapy. She noted that they are starting a big donation campaign for the project. She also noted that the Food Policy Council is still meeting regularly. A food access resource brochure was debuted at that meeting. Information was gleaned from a previously distributed brochure by "Be There...Billings" campaign and came out of a Childhood Hunger Summit in 2010 and additional information was added. They are also working on a food access map that highlights the different service providers, where food retailers are located, fast food restaurants, and some of the shopping areas in town. It also shows where food deserts exist and where food is highly accessible, like along bus and transportation routes. They have also been developing working committees in preparation of handing the reins over when they end their service in July.

10:00 – Break – A 10 minute break was called.

After the break, Daniele Reisbig reported that April is Fair Housing month and the Community Housing Resource Board is planning a community movie at the library, April 5th, at 6:30. The movie is "Raisin in the Sun" with Sidney Poitier. She noted that Wal-Mart generously donated \$150 towards snacks for the event. A community discussion will be held after the movie. April 28 will be the Fair Housing Banquet with a panel discussion with participants Pam Bean, Jim Whiteside and Kathy Koontz. Invitations will be sent out for the event. Project Homeless Connect (PHC) is wrapping up with 3rd quarter reporting on statistics and a PHC video.

Draft Consolidated Plan Review & Approval: Beckett discussed the draft Consolidated Plan and the changes she made to the fair housing section. Jim Whiteside, HUD-Denver, is the fair housing officer and will be in Billings for two days of training. April 26 is for Fair Housing Initiative Program grantees specifically and the April 27 training is on both Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing and Section 3 Compliance. Emily Shaffer would like information on both trainings and a copy of the draft Action Plan mailed to her. Year 2 Annual Action Plan to the Consolidated Plan is due to HUD on May 15th. Beckett noted that the public comment period is now through April 25.

In a motion made by Kamber Kelly and seconded by Emily Shaffer, the Community Development Board unanimously voted to approve the draft Annual Action Plan and forward it to City Council to set a public hearing.

Staff Recommendations Report: Beckett distributed the staff recommendations report based on a 7.5% cut in CDBG and a 10% cut in HOME. First priority would be to fund fully CDBG and HOME admin, followed by Kings Green Phase IV, and Housing Rehabilitation Program. She recommends setting property management and special assessment grant funds at a minimum. She also stated that the CHDO

fund is negotiable at this point because homeWORD has a project that will keep us in compliance for a couple of years. She also recommended that public services be fully funded. Discussion ensued regarding additional cuts, if necessary. Staff recommends funding Kings Green Phase IV over First Time Home Buyer Program as the Kings Green project has been ten years in the process to get to this point. Staff would really like to finish the project for the sake of all concerned. Funding for this project would remove the dirt pile problem and develop the infrastructure for the last ten houses in the subdivision. After much discussion, the board decided to wait until after lunch to continue the discussion and voting on the recommendations.

11:00 – Break for Lunch

Budget Recommendations: The meeting reconvened at 11:45 a.m. Due to perceived conflict of interest issues, the following board members recused themselves from voting:

- Kamber Kelly – **HN-6**, First Time Home Buyers
- David Goodridge – **HN-6**, First Time Home Buyers and **HN-4**, Affordable Housing Development Program
- Kathleen Candelaria – **HN-6**, First Time Home Buyers and **HN-4**, Affordable Housing Development Program

Jim Hartung then did a recap of the discussions on staff recommendations before lunch. Recommendations and voting began with public service applications.

Dave Goodridge moved that PS-2 Southside Senior Center – Kitchen Equipment and PS-3 Tumbleweed Runaway Program be fully funded at \$30,000/each over the next three years. Emily Shaffer seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Emily Shaffer made a motion to fully fund PS-1 Tree Planting & Removal Program over the next three years in the amount of \$10,000/year, if funding is available. Goodridge seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Dave Goodridge moved that, if less than \$60,000 is allocated to public services due to larger budget cuts, first priority would be given to PS-3 Tumbleweed Runaway Program because of filling the need of children and, second, to South Side Senior Center for its kitchen equipment. Emily Shaffer seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion passed with 5 for and 1 against.

Housing and Neighborhood applications were then discussed as follows:

Dave Goodridge moved to approve funding of HN-1 CDBG Administration, HN-2 HOME Administration, and HN-3 Professional Services as staff recommends. Seconded by Kamber Kelly. Emily Shaffer suggested that, once projects are funded, the board go back and look at staff recommendations again for zero funding items and possibly fund them; especially, Professional Services for VISTA support. Brenda Beckett recommended that CDBG admin get funded up to \$175,000 and anything left over go to Professional Services for VISTA program. She thanked Shaffer for her support of VISTA. ***Motion approved unanimously.***

Emily Shaffer moved that, if more funding than projected is available, CDBG Administration receive the full \$175,000 requested with any remaining funding being allocated to Professional Services for VISTA support. Kamber Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Kamber Kelly then moved that, when the federal budget is released, HOME Admin is to be funded up to 10% of the HOME budget. Dave Goodridge seconded the motion and it was approved unanimously.

Kamber Kelly moved that HN-7 Minor Home Repair, HN-8 Housing Rehabilitation Loan Program, and HN-9 Paint Program be accepted at staff recommendation as proposed. Emily Shaffer seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Kamber Kelly moved that the board approve staff recommendation on HN-10 Property Management and HN-11 Special Assessment Grants. Dave Goodridge seconded and the motion passed unopposed.

Kamber Kelly moved that HN-12 Section 8 Deposit Assistance – Housing Authority, HN-13 Rebuilding Together, and HN-14 be approved as staff recommended. Dave Goodridge seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Discussion then ensued on the remaining applications, HN-4, HN-6, HN-5, and HN-15. Discussion on the infrastructure for Kings Green was \$350,000 for 14 homes in Phase III or \$25,000 per home. The cost of removing the dirt pile at Kings Green has been bid in the past for \$50,000. It was noted that the City is the initial developer of this subdivision and a request for proposals is advertised for building the homes. The only responder has been Real Estate Dynamics. Goodridge stated that he thought funding would best be allocated to First Time Home Buyers to get more people in affordable housing than to put it into infrastructure to build and sell 10 homes and complete the project. Shaffer suggested that funds be allocated to remove the dirt pile and wait for a year to fund the infrastructure. Shaffer asked for the number of approved applications for the First Time Home Buyer program. Dina Billington stated there are 47 currently waiting for funding. Beckett stated that the Kings Green Project has been going on for more than 10 years and that it is time to complete it, also neighborhood complaints regarding the vacant land have increased lately.

Discussion on HN-15 Housing Authority of Billings – Garden and HN-5 Set Aside for CHDOs ensued. CHDO funding is 15% of total HOME funding but, because of the homeWORD agreement, funding is not necessary for this year. **Kamber Kelly moved that the staff recommended amount for HN-5 Set-Aside for CHDOs be removed and placed back in the pool of funding; thereby setting the CHDO funding at zero. Emily Shaffer seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.** Approximately \$72,646 has been returned to the pool of HOME funding for this FY2011-12.

HN-15 Housing Authority of Billings – Garden was discussed. This funding request is for the first phase of the project and the majority of cost is for accessibility. This project is in a low-income area and the garden will be available to everyone in the area. **Dave Goodridge moved to accept staff recommendations to fund this project at \$50,000. Kamber Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.**

Emily Shaffer moved that \$350,000 be allocated to HN-4 Affordable Housing Development Program for the Kings Green infrastructure for Phase IV. Patt Leikam seconded the motion. Motion passed with 3 recused.

Emily Shaffer moved that \$319,372 be allocated to HN-6 First Time Home Buyer. Funding consists of \$86,285 in CDBG funding and \$233,087 in HOME funding. Patt Leikam seconded the motion and it passed with three recused.

The board members then addressed contingencies in the event of either greater or lesser funding. Dave Goodridge suggested the board give priority recommendations on HN-12 – HN-15 and that staff give priority recommendations on HN-1 – HN-11.

Brenda Beckett prioritized as follows:

1. HN-1 – CDBG Admin
2. HN-2 – HOME Admin
3. HN-10 – Property Management
4. HN-4 – Affordable Housing – Kings Green
5. HN-8 – Housing Rehab
6. HN-6 – First Time Home Buyer
7. HN-7 – Minor Home Repair
8. HN-11 – Special Assessment Grants
9. HN-3 – Professional Services
10. HN-9 – Paint Program
11. HN-5 – Set-Aside for CHDOs – No funding this year

Dave Goodridge moved that the board approve priority for HN-2 through HN-11 as staff recommended. Kamber Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously. The board recommended that if there is any funding remaining that staff fully fund each priority in order as funding is available.

The board then set its priority for HN-12 through HN-15 as follows:

12. HN-14 – YCCOA – Minor Home Repair
13. HN-12 – Section 8 Deposit Assistance – Housing Authority
14. HN-13 – Rebuilding Together
15. HN-15 – Housing Authority of Billings – Garden Project

Patt Leikam moved that the priorities set for HN-12 through HN-15 be accepted as recommended. Kamber Kelly seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

Neighborhood Concerns: None.

Meeting adjourned at 1:22 pm.