PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting was held on March 9, 2015, at 1:02 p.m. with Chairman Dixon presiding. Members present were Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Caldwell, and Mrs. Horsey. Mr. Anderson arrived at 1:12 p.m.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Hutchison moved for acceptance of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Caldwell and unanimously carried.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Application Review

Mrs. Tracey Harvey, Community Development Manager, noted that members would be serving as the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Review Panel for the CDBG Applications for a five-year grant period Fiscal Years 2015-2019. As such, members were provided a list of applicants, a CDBG Interview Schedule, a breakdown of federal resources available for use and the total amount of grant funds requested, CDBG scoring criteria, a 2015 CDBG Review Panel Scoring Sheet for each applicant, and staff reports summarizing each application. Mrs. Harvey requested that members summarize their evaluation of each application on the CDBG Grant Application Review Sheet and provide a score based on the information presented. Members were advised that the numbers in parenthesis next to each measure indicated the maximum score for a given category and that the maximum total points was 100. Mrs. Harvey advised members that the applicants were scheduled in 15 minute intervals, 10 minutes for presentation and 5 minutes for questions, and asked members to try to stay within the scheduled times allotted due to the number of applicants.

Mrs. Harvey advised members that the total amount of grant funds available for activities was $229,271 and explained the allocation requirements of the grant, as follows:

CDBG Funds Allocation	$220,717
Anticipated Program Income	$ 8,554
Total Grant Allocation	$229,271
Public Service activities cannot exceed	$229,271
15% of the grant	x.15
	$34,391
Grant Funds Available for Activities	$229,271
Total Grant Funds Requested by Applicants	$304,976

Mrs. Harvey cautioned that, according to CDBG requirements, funds awarded for public service activities could not exceed 15% of the total grant allocation ($34,391).

Verbal Presentations

Each applicant was provided an opportunity to make verbal presentations before the committee, as follows:

Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing

Ms. Jeanine Kleimo, Chair, Board of Directors, Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing (DIMH), reviewed a grant application in the amount of $32,500. She explained that DIMH is an interfaith community organization which provides shelter, meals, and assistance to homeless men from the greater Dover community. Ms. Kleimo indicated that DIMH's shelter at 684 Forest Street can accommodate up to 36 lodgers. She noted that they are permitted by the City to take in a few extra people when the weather is extremely cold to keep people off of the street and out of the dangerous temperatures.

Ms. Kleimo explained that the CDBG funds being applied for will be applied to operation and maintenance of the shelter, particularly utility costs and repairs and maintenance of the building.

Ms. Kleimo advised that the organization began in 2008 and sheltered more than 1200 men, resulting in reduction of crime, loitering, etc. She stated that during calender year 2014 they sheltered 180 men. Mrs. Kleimo explained that the organization has maintained a success rate of approximately 60% in transitioning men from the shelter into permanent employment and private housing, with an estimated impact of approximately $1.5M on the local economic community and the growth of greater Dover.

Ms. Kleimo stated that within the last CDBG cycle they received $27,500, which they combined with $12,500 from the Delaware State Housing Authority (DSHA) and that nearly covers the operating and maintenance costs for the shelter.

Ms. Kleimo said most of the staff is made up of volunteers, including herself, with a limited number of staff whom are funded by other grants. In addition to the shelter, in January 2015, DIMH began operating a daytime resource center where homeless individuals can get assistance. Ms. Kleimo stated that they have provided service to as many as 70 people a day since it opened, including those that have been served by the "Code Purple" sanctuaries for emergency cold weather shelter. Ms. Kleimo reiterated that both of those programs, the daytime resource center and Code Purple, are staffed entirely by volunteers. Also, Ms. Kleimo advised that DIMH recently opened a 30-bed congregate housing facility that is not supported by grant funds but aids in facilitating the transition from shelter to independent living by providing a very affordable residence with continued access to programs and case management.

Ms. Kleimo stated that the organization receives significant support from local faith communities, businesses, and private citizens of Dover, particularly through the provision of dinners for the members and providing a venue to dispel some of the stereotypes of homelessness.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Ms. Kleimo advised that the average age range of men that utilize their services is about 25 ranging from late 20's to mid 40's.

Responding to Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Kleimo stated that she had a great deal of success stories she could share but the most recent involved an addict that had been in prison who, after seeking the services of DIMH, now has his own home who he shares with a friend, is a sous chef at Dover Downs Hotel

& Casino and is pursuing an education in cooking and counseling at Delaware Technical and Community College.

In response to Mr. Kirby Hudson, Assistant City Manager, regarding seeing an increase in those seeking their services and if she felt that was due to an increase in population of the homeless in the area or awareness of the programs available, Ms. Kleimo stated that she did not see an increase, although they have had a significant demand for the Code Purple sanctuaries this winter; however, there is a transient population of men who have lost employment, residency, and seek their assistance in becoming re-established. In addition, they provide re-entry assistance for men leaving prison in hopes to reduce the recidivism by helping them acclimate to society and educate them with the resources available to them, noting that those who do seek their services have a much lower rate of recidivism than those who do not. Responding to Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Kleimo stated that they are seeing a lot of Veterans, on average 4-6 Veterans at any given time, stating that DIMH is now a part of the Mayor's Challenge to end Veteran's Homelessness.

Mr. Dixon expressed appreciation for the work performed in the community by DIMH.

In closing, Ms. Kleimo made note that she was proud of the statistic that in spite of a budget of zero, the shelter serves more than 12,000 plates of dinner a year thanks to the generosity of the community.

Connections Community Support Program

Kathy McKay, Chief Executive Officer, explained that Connections serves extremely low income individuals that have been chronically homeless for one year or more. The grant request is for $15,000 to provide rapid rehousing and rental assistance services for households whose most recent address is inside the City limits. The program will assist renters with the security deposit and up to the first three months' rent for affordable rental housing. Funding will also be provided for utility deposits as needed.

Ms. McKay stated that Connections is state-wide organization and has 1,300 employees throughout Delaware. She stated that in addition to assisting the homeless, they also participate in healthcare efforts in Delaware's Unified Correctional System providing primary healthcare, behavioral healthcare, and re-entry planning in all of the jails and prisons in Delaware. The only facility in the City of Dover is Morris Correctional Institute which is a level IV (work release) facility.

Ms. McKay stated that they had two main facilities in Dover, one on Division Street which provides treatment programs for serious mental illness and previously institutionalized individuals and one on Bay Road that is an integrated clinic that provides primary care, mental health, and substance abuse treatment for individuals. Ms. McKay noted that the Division Street location also provides supportive services for Veterans and their families.

The request for CDBG is for emergency solutions, specifically providing financial assistance for short-term rental subsidies, including security and utility deposits for people in need of housing who do not have those resources up-front. In some cases Connections is able to provide longer term

rental subsidies out of other possible funding such as Housing and Urban Development (HUD) grants, but those grants do not pay for deposits, which is important because while some individuals may have a source of long term assistance, they have been unable to pay their utility bills in the past and are not able to secure services without a security deposit or may still have outstanding balances that are preventing them from securing future services, which in itself can prevent them from obtaining housing which causes them to remain homeless. Connections provides emergency solution grants for Wilmington, New Castle County, and Delaware State Housing Authority; however, the CDBG grant will enable them to focus on the City of Dover specifically.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Ms. McKay advised that if the inmate is on a work release programm they are sometimes alerted to their release; however, due to various circumstances, they are not typically informed ahead of time when they are released.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding the background of the individuals that seek Connections services to obtain housing or employment, Ms. McKay advised that they are less desirable as tenants or employees and that their background often includes either drugs, alcohol, mental illness, or criminal activity and incarceration; however, it is their philosophy that those individuals are in the community so it is in everyone's best interest to try to provide them with the support and assistance they need to make improvements and to be aware of where they are located within the community.

Responding to Mr. Caldwell, Ms. McKay explained that some people that have sought the services of Connections continue to be a problem within the community; however, it is not their role to police the behavior of the individuals but to help them. Ms. McKay stated that, in some cases, Connections is able to work with Probation and Parole if the individual is on probation. She explained that, due to the Truth-In-Sentencing Act, Delaware does not have a Parole program because once the inmate serves their prison sentence they are released without parole. Ms. McKay stated that there are cases when the original sentence includes a probation period upon release from the institution or in some cases, typically involving drug use, the sentence is one of probation.

In response to Mr. Anderson regarding the temporary hotel program where individuals are supplied vouchers, Ms. McKay advised that the program had been phased out after it was determined locally, and later confirmed nationally, that it proved to be ineffective at ending homelessness. Ms. McKay explained that once the temporary fix expired and there was no permanent solution, the individuals returned to being homeless. Ms. McKay stated that over the last 5-6 years, Federal Research has indicated that the best method to end homelessness among people who have been homeless more than one time is to help them get permanent housing and provide support to help them remain in that housing.

Mr. Anderson asked how a mother, father, and five children living in Capital Green, determined to improve their living conditions and leave that complex, started their own business and then were asked to leave just as they started to do well and have enough money to relocate, would benefit from this program. Ms. McKay explained that is the ideal scenario for why the program was created. Ms. McKay said that often the only resource a family like that would have is Connections because they would likely not qualify financially for many other subsidy programs. Ms. McKay stated that

this program is not well suited for individuals or families that are chronically homeless and never demonstrate the ability to maintain residency or employment, because it is often too short-term and they are not able to secure permanent housing or employment. Ms. McKay stated that a family that just needs assistance, such as described by Mr. Anderson, would greatly benefit from the program.

In response to Mr. Anderson, Ms. McKay stated that she felt the State's 211 Intake System was ineffective, noting that homelessness is typically an issue at night and on the weekends and the hours for the 211 Intake System are 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. so it is not available when the people need it.

Responding to Mrs. Horsey, Ms. McKay advised that although they have a great deal of referrals, they have more walk-ins. She noted that they are usually people looking for the Emergency Service Grant (ESG) money, which is the program they are applying for CDBG funding for within the City of Dover. Ms. McKay also advised that Connections assists people with the documentation required to apply for the various funding and resources that may be available. She explained that much of the information and documentation is available online, which enables them to assist more efficiently.

In response to Mr. Hudson, Ms. McKay stated that the Department of Corrections has a sex offender treatment program so they are typically aware of who the pedophiles and sex offenders. She also noted that there are three tiers for sex offenders, which dictates how they handle them. Ms. McKay advised that tiers 2 and 3 require notice be given to landlords and surrounding residents; however, she felt it was best to be upfront in all cases to avoid complications later which may result in an unplanned eviction. Ms. McKay stated that by helping to place those individuals, they are aware of their locations because they are required to register as a sex offender, if they remain homeless it's not possible to track there whereabouts.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Ms. McKay advised that Connections services approximately five-hundred people in the City of Dover a month and approximately 35,000 state-wide. Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, added that those figures include all services provided by Connections, not just those specifically related to homelessness.

In response to Mr. Dixon regarding sex offenders arriving in Delaware from other states, Ms. McKay said that Delaware has some of the most stringent sex offender laws; however, she also noted that there are not a lot of programs available to treat sex offenders outside of the criminal justice system.

Nehemiah Gateway

Maisha Thoms, Director for the Delaware Tax and Financial Services Tax Campaign, advised that the program is a federally funded IRS Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program that provides free income tax return services for low to moderate income individuals and families. Ms. Thoms explained that the thresholds to qualify for the program are $52,000 with dependants and $35,000 without dependents. Ms. Thoms stated that the Nehemiah Gateway Community Development Corporation (NGCDC) is a 501 (c)(3) organization that was founded in 2000 as an outreach initiative of Shiloh Baptist Church. Ms. Thoms shared the HGCDC's mission to work with

members of the community that are in the low to moderate income bracket trying to successfully improve their economic well-being. Ms. Thoms said the hope is to increase opportunities for asset building, financial management, and entrepreneurship in the Delaware region. Some of the programs the NGCDC offer are Delaware Tax and Financial Services (VITA) Campaign, VIP Small Business Support Services, which is a program that assists entrepreneurs in the start up of business and sometimes assists with existing businesses, insurance services, and "One Step at a Time" Credit Counseling. Ms. Thoms explained that this program supports the housing and community development goal of the Dover Comprehensive Plan by improving the economic stability of low to moderate individuals and families, more specifically it encourages owner-occupied housing and preserving the existing housing statistics by assisting individuals with access to tax credits without incurring the cost of paid preparers. Ms. Thoms advised that national statistics indicate that, on average, low to moderate income individuals and families receive earned income tax credit for three years or less and they spend those funds locally, which was over $255,000 state-wide last year.

Responding to Mrs. Harvey, Ms. Thoms explained that the CDBG funds would be used for back office support services, stating that there are currently four sites within the City of Dover. She noted that they were unsure if they would consolidate or expand in the future; however, they have one paid position at each site to manage the site and the volunteers.

In response to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Thoms explained that the requested amount of $20,000 was determined by allocating $18,000 for the VITA program and $2,000 for the savings program, which requires hiring individuals to assist with opening saving accounts with Artisans Bank. Ms. Thoms further explained that they get about 700 referrals state-wide for the VITA program and that even after tax season is over, a staff person follows up with each of the referrals and assists them with finding additional resources for saving money, obtaining housing, etc. Ms. Thoms explained that she did not have a more specific breakdown of how the $18,000 would be allocated within the VITA program; however, she stated she could provide the budget information before the end of the meeting.

Responding to Mr. Caldwell, Ms. Thoms stated that the majority of their volunteers come from the various local schools, Delaware State University in particular, and some from the University of Delaware, Delaware Technical and Community College, and Wilmington University. She noted that Wilmington University is actually one of the locations they utilize for the tax preparation program.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Ms. Thoms stated that the average age of their clients is 35-44; however, they also service senior citizens and younger clients as well. Ms. Thoms noted the VITA program services approximately 7% of the population who receive an earned income tax credit, which is statistically high nationwide. Many other territories are only capturing about 2% of that population.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Thoms explained that part of the programs service is to connect individuals seeking assistance with other resources to further educate them on fiscal responsibility and efforts to promote savings onsite when filing taxes.

Responding to Mr. Hudson, Ms. Thoms advised that the program did not have a component to help people who may be in danger of losing their homes or helping them with home ownership; however, she advised that they make referrals to the appropriate agencies, such as First State Community Action, depending on the individual's need.

Ms. Thoms stated that they provide assistance with creating business plans, providing marketing research, insurance, etc. to guide new businesses in promoting their business and being successful. She noted that they also help existing businesses that may require assistance in those areas. Ms. Thoms stated that some of the businesses they are working as many as 10 businesses that are looking for additional space to expand or possibly to move to a new area. Mr. Hudson suggested she direct those people to the workshop being held by the City on Wednesday, March 11, 2015 to hear a presentation on the Downtown Redevelopment District and the various incentives and benefits available.

People's Place

Del Failing, Executive Director, stated that People's Place II is requesting $6,726.46 in CDBG funding to replace 18 windows in their Ruth Dorsey Whatnot Emergency Homeless Shelter at 381 State College Road in Dover, which is the only shelter in Dover that serves men, women, and children. Mr. Failing explained that it is a 46-bed shelter that has been in operation since 1977, noting that in February 2015 the shelter served an average of 39 people a night. People's Place became the new owner of the shelter, along with Vera's Haven, which is a ten-unit transitional housing facility. Mr. Failing said that in 2014, the Ruth Dorsey Emergency Homeless Shelter provided 10,598 nights of shelter to 710 men, women, and children. He noted that in 2010, People's Place came before this board to request funding to replace the heater at the shelter' noting that they were not awarded the funding at that time. Since then, the heater has been replaced and they are now seeking the funds to make the facility more energy efficient to reduce utility costs.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Failing stated they received a quote from Lowe's on the cost of the project and offered to solicit another quote if that was the Committee's preference in the course of providing funding. Mr. Hutchison advised that he just wanted to ensure that the amount requested for funding would cover the expense of the project.

Mr. Failing noted that the shelter also serves veterans, stating that at any given time they may have two to three veterans at the shelter. He noted that they no longer receive funding from the Veteran's Administration.

In response to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Failing stated that this was a one time request and he did not foresee a reason to come back before the Committee to request additional funding.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mr. Failing stated that he felt the States 211 System is problematic because if someone is looking for shelter, they need it immediately and they are not in a position to leave a message or wait for a call back to find placement. He thought the State was working on improving the system.

Responding to Mrs. Horsey, Mr. Failing advised that the facility it is an old Victorian house and they have made every effort to improve the efficiency of the house, which includes two additions that are much more modern and energy efficient.

Responding to Mr. Hudson's suggestion that some stores such as Home Depot may donate materials or labor for the shelter, Mr. Failing stated that they had approached Home Depot and they remodeled the kitchen in 2010.

Veteran Housing Proposal

Dr. Joe W. Burden, Jr., Property Owner and Manager, proposed a Veteran's Housing Complex (VHC) located at 15 Clarence Street in Dover. Dr. Burden described the project as a five-unit complex, each with their own outside access, living room, and two bedrooms with windows. Dr. Burden stated that 10% of all homeless individuals in the United States are Veterans and that Delaware had the highest percentage increase, 34.6%, in the Nation from 2012 to 2013.

Dr. Burden explained that he would be managing the grant and an electrician, a plumber, and a staff of carpenters and other personnel had been contracted to facilitate the project. Dr. Burden explained that he is seeking CDBG funding to renovate the facility for the purpose of housing homeless veterans in the City of Dover, describing it as centrally located, close to the DelDot bus station, City of Dover Police Station, and Bayhealth Hospital.

Dr. Burden stated that the total requested funding for the first year is $21,250.00 and will be allocated to interior renovations. The amount requested for the second year is $5,000.00, which will be used for renovations and repairs on the exterior for a total request of $26,250.00. Dr. Burden stated that $4,250 will be applied to each of the five apartments for interior renovations. Referring to the information provided, Dr. Burden reviewed the work plan with the committee.

Dr. Burden explained that this project fulfills the objectives of the CDBG grant application by providing cost efficient housing to homeless veterans, noting that it will be the first facility specifically for veterans in the City of Dover.

Responding to Mrs. Harvey, Dr. Burden advised that they allotted two months for each of the five apartments and once that portion is complete, they will focus on the exterior the second year. Dr. Burden stated that, based on the grant application criteria, he thought the grant extended over a period and they planned the schedule for renovation based on that criteria. Mrs. Harvey inquired about additional resources being leveraged in the event they did not get enough funding from CDBG. Responding, Dr. Burden advised that they planned to move forward before they were made aware of the CDBG grant money that was potentially available so they will complete the project without the funding if they have to; however, the funds requested would facilitate the completion of the project.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Mrs. Townshend advised that the location of the proposed Veteran Housing Unit was within the Downtown Development District and, as such, they could potentially

qualify for rebates based on their expenses for the rehabilitation project separate from any CDBG funding. Mrs. Townshend further clarified that the $25,000 requirement to qualify under the Downtown Development District for rebates would apply after the applicant spent $25,000, she explained it would not include dollars spent from a grant.

Responding to Mr. Anderson regarding a charity umbrella for the Veteran Housing Unit, Dr. Burden advised that they attended the Mayor's Summit for Homeless Veterans and several other entities have expressed interest in participating in the project. In response to Mr. Anderson's inquiry regarding who would be receiving and managing the funds, Dr. Burden explained that he would be handling the funding from start to finish. He stated that, although they are not a formal charity, they have spent a great deal of their own funds on housing for the low to moderate income community.

In response to Mr. Anderson's concern regarding Dr. Burden's inexperience with the stringent requirements for grant funding and the control mechanisms in place, Dr. Burden advised that he and his staff would stay abreast of the reporting requirements. He added that although he had not received financial grants, he had received academic grants and written several grants. In addition, Dr. Burden noted his experience in records management pertaining to his various housing properties.

In response to Mr. Anderson regarding the minimum amount of funding they would require for the Veteran Housing Unit project, Dr. Burden advised that he deals primarily with low to moderate income clientele and frequently the rent does not get paid on time, or at all, and they still have a responsibility to pay their bills, so any amount of support that the City would be willing to give would be helpful.

Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity

Ms. Jocelyn Tice, Executive Director, explained that the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity's mission is to put God's love into action by bringing people together to build affordable homes and communities. Ms. Tice explained that they focus on members of the community that are 60% or below the area median income, which is the low and very low income bracket, consistent with CDBG requirements.

Ms. Tice stated that the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity is celebrating its 25th anniversary, during which time they have housed 38 homeowners. They are finalizing their 39th and 40th homes and have already begun to work on homeowner number 41 on Mifflin Road. Ms. Tice stated that they have seven (7) more projects planned for the City of Dover for this year. Ms. Tice advised that of the 38 homeowners, there have been no foreclosures and four (4) homeowners have paid off their mortgages.

Ms. Tice stated that their mission is to empower and equip homeowners by having them attend financial literacy classes at NCALL Research and providing HUD Certified financial counseling. They also require homeowners to commit to 250 hours of direct activity, 100 of which are spent on the construction site learning how to maintain and repair the home.

Ms. Tice reviewed information obtained through a survey of homeowners that have lived in their homes for more than 6 months demonstrating satisfaction with the home, neighborhood, overall experience with habitat, safety, lifestyle and financial improvements. Of those surveyed, Ms. Tice noted that 95% of the homeowners expressed a positive change, 90% indicated that the 250 hour requirement was very helpful in preparing them for home maintenance.

In summary, Ms. Tice advised that the Central Delaware Habitat for Humanity has built and/or renovated 17 homes in the City of Dover out of the 38 homes overall, last year 14 of those homes contributed to about $5,500 in taxes to the City and while they have not built in Dover in about four (4) years, they now have eight (8) homes planned for the 2015 calendar year.

Ms. Tice stated that all of the projects in the downtown Dover area are consistent with the Restoring Central Dover Plan that was recently released by NCALL focusing on increasing homeownership. She noted that in Kent County 47% of renters are reported to spend more than 30% of their income on housing. Ms. Tice explained that the Fair Market Value (FMV) of a two (2) bedroom apartment in Kent County is approximately $910, while the average mortgage for a home acquired through Habitat is $467. She stated that the average mortgage for the eight (8) homes planned for the City of Dover is expected to be approximately $550 for a 3 or 4 bedroom house with 1½ bathrooms and a garage.

Referring to the Central Dover Housing Initiative map, Ms. Tice explained that Habitat was awarded $672,000 and $191,000 from the strong neighborhoods housing fund in collaboration with Milford Housing and NCALL Research for 12-14 homes. She stated years 1 and 2 of the requested CDBG funds would be applied to renovations in the amount of approximately $50,000 per home and, in years 3,4, and 5 those funds would be allocated more toward a owner occupied repair program. Ms. Tice explained that the first two (2) years are critical due to the requirements for the strong neighborhood funding received, so they are able to acquire property and are seeking CDBG funds to renovate the properties. She stated that the strong neighborhood initiative was to transform areas of high crime, etc. and informed members that they identified the 19 block Proposed Target Neighborhood. Ms. Tice explained that the intent was to buy two (2) homes over the next two (2) years, one (1) each year, to renovate as part of the strong neighborhoods initiative.

Ms. Tice noted that in past years Habitat partnered with the City, County and Diamond State Community Land Trust on six (6) homes through the NSP (Neighborhood Stabilization Program), which has had a successful homeownership rate. Additionally, she stated that Habitat had received government funding from the State Housing Authority Housing Development Fund. Habitat last received CDBG fund in 2010, in the amount of $32,000, to help renovate a home on Jefferson Court. Ms. Tice stated that the program was consistent with the CDBG grant application and the 2010-2014 consolidated plan, rehabilitating substandard housing and also expanding homeownership. She recognized that the number one (1) problem is homelessness, and the second is housing needs.

Ms. Tice explained that program participants are required to live or work in Kent County for one (1) year; demonstrate ability for repayment and a need for housing, which is determined through a

volunteer family selection committee; and be willing to partner with Habitat through a commitment to the sweat equity, and attendance of events and speaking engagements.

Ms. Tice advised that Habitat was currently in the process of identifying the properties to acquire through the strong neighborhood funds within the next month, stating that the target area was S. Queen Street. She reiterated that the primary focus is to look at a concentrated rather than scattered area to show a visual transformation and impact. Remaining consistent with the strong neighborhoods funding, Ms. Tice explained that the CDBG funds would supplement funds already secured. She stated that Habitat would begin negotiations with sellers, identify homeowners at their homeownership seminar in August, and start renovations in the beginning of 2016.

Responding to Mrs. Harvey regarding the $50,000 amount requested for renovations without having first identified the property, Ms. Tice explained that historically Habitat had spent $50,000 and it is a fairly accurate estimate.

Mrs. Harvey questioned how soon the property would be acquired, noting the fact that the funds would be released in July 2015 and that the property must be acquired before the funds can be released. In response, Ms. Tice stated that Habitat was certain they would be able to work within that time frame. She explained that under the strong neighborhood funding, money has to be spent, homes sold, built and renovated within two (2) years (by April 2017), and she anticipates that at least one (1), if not both, homes will be acquired prior to the end of June 2015.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Tice stated that Habitat did not currently have a home under contract. Referring to the Potential Properties indicated on the Central Dover Housing Initiative map, she stated that nine (9) homes are available, and stated that they have already begun discussions with the owner of 133 South Queen Street and are also working with a local realtor who provided a list of homes currently on the market in the target area.

In response to Mr. Hutchison regarding each person identified to participate in the program and the training that is required of them, Ms. Tice advised that the financial literacy training is provided by NCALL; however, the selection process occurs within Habitat. She noted that Habitat has a home ownership seminar which participants are required to attend in order to submit an application. Ms. Tice explained that the application includes employment verification, rental verification, a credit report, and a home visit and the appliation is submitted to the board for approval, all of which takes about two to three months. Once approved, they are enrolled in NCALL's financial classes, they attend an all day workshop, and take an on-line e-home money class. Ms. Tice advised that Habitat has begun offering post-homeownership workshops to provide information on budgeting, home repairs, etc. to assist the owners in maintaining homeownership through continued education.

Milford Housing Development Corporation (MHDC)

Mrs. Harvey explained that MHDC applied for two separate grant applications, one for Homeownership Rehabilitation in the amount of $60,000, and one for Emergency Home Repair in the amount of $40,000. Mrs. Townshend advised the Committee that the City of Dover used to do

the Rehabilitation Program but have since turned the program over to MHDC, stating that it is something that has always been funded, but used to be funded through the City. Clarifying, Mrs. Townshend assured the Committee that all of the CDBG funds awarded for this program are spent within the City of Dover.

Mr. Russell Huxtable, Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, advised that MHDC is a private, non-profit, housing development corporation whose mission is to provide affordable housing solutions to families in low to moderate incomes. This is accomplished through several programs, including the Homeowner Rehabilitation Program that Ms. Fran Cardaci, Housing Preservation Manager, has been running for the past one and a half years and has been a part of MHDC for almost five years.

Ms. Cardaci explained that the home repair project began in 1991 and ultimately went under the First State Conservation Development Council and, at the end of 2011, moved to Milford Housing. She explained that the home repair project targets very low income homeowners and providing home repairs. Ms. Cardaci said that in the City of Dover low income is considered 80% of the area median income or less whereas other locations are 50% or below median. Ms. Cardaci explained that some of the repairs included in the home repair program include furnaces, hot water heaters, roofs, doors, floors, windows, steps, and wheel chair ramps. She explained that the CDBG program is a higher level, more expensive, type of repair program, such as correcting major code violations. Ms. Cardaci noted that in some cases they are able to combine the two different types of programs to assist the homeowner with minor, as well as major, repairs.

Mrs. Townshend advised the Committee that these programs are a useful tool with code enforcement as they often refer homeowners to these programs to receive assistance to make the necessary changes to resolve the violations and be in compliance.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison regarding how a person qualifies, Ms. Cardaci stated income and ownership. She advised that for the HRP program, the recipient must own and live in the home for at least one year with the intention to stay for at least two years and meet the income requirements. Ms. Cardaci stated that to qualify for the CDBG program, they have to live in the home for three years, it has to be their primary home, and they have to have their taxes up to date. She advised that for the CDBG program, the homeowners sign a lien against the home, whereas, if they sell, move, or abandon the home, there is a recorded lien for repayment.

Responding to Mr. Anderson on identifying an emergency under the Emergency Home Repair Program (HRP), Ms. Cardaci explained that the homeowner has to be qualified in order to receive assistance and, therefore, it is not immediate; however, MHDC assists the homeowner in any way they can, including going to the house to pick up the paperwork in order to get them approved and do the repairs. Ms. Cardaci cited an example of a homeowner who's heater stopped working and requested repairs on Wednesday and by Tuesday of the following week the heater was repaired at no cost to the homeowner.

Responding to Mr. Anderson, Ms. Valerie Miller, Development Director, advised that the funds are leveraged to achieve additional funding; however, the funds from the CDBG program broaden the range of clients because it enables them to assist people with up to 80% median income whereas in other areas, they are only able to go up to 50% of median income.

Ms. Cardaci advised that the HRP program assisted 131 homes, although the program has not received funding since July 2014. She noted that any funds that were used for homes within the City since then were paid out of other grant money and not the CDBG grant.

Responding to Mrs. Harvey, Ms. Cardaci stated that MHDC has applied for two different grant amounts which equate to half of the CDBG available funding. She noted that they have already qualified six homeowners and have an additional three that have been pre-qualified since the beginning of the year and she is confident the funds will be spent in the required time frame.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Ms. Miller advised that $60,000 was requested for Home Repair and $40,000 for Emergency Repair.

City of Dover Homeownership Assistance Program

Mrs. Tracey Harvey, Community Development Manager, reviewed a grant application in the amount of $60,000 for the City of Dover Homeownership Assistance Program. She indicated that this program provides first-time homebuyers assistance with down payment or closing costs, allowing them to purchase affordable housing in the City of Dover. Mrs. Harvey advised that since the program was initiated in 1995, they have had 96 home closures using City of Dover funds. Initially the down payment assistance amount was $5,000 and now it is as high as $20,000. Mrs. Harvey advised that 100% the funds were spent annually and, as of 2014, 92% of the funds have been spent.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Harvey confirmed that if the funds are awarded, the program would provide up to $20,000 in down payment assistance for qualified homebuyers. She reiterated that last year they were awarded $100,000 and 92% of those funds have been expended with six people being able to purchase homes using this funding.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Harvey clarified that the funds would be used city-wide and not just in the downtown Dover area.

Mrs. Townshend advised members that recipients of the program are required to sign a lien on the home stating that they will remain in the home for 10 years if awarded $20,000 in down payment assistance and 5 years if awarded $10,000 in down payment assistance; otherwise, they would have to pay the City back for the funds provided for the down payment.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Harvey advised that of the other applicants requesting funding today, MHDC requires the recipient to sign a lien against the home requiring repayment of the assistance if they do not remain in the home. Mr. Hutchison expressed his support of that requirement.

Review/Scoring of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Applications

Mrs. Harvey advised members that funds in the amount of $304,976 had been requested and only $229,271 was available. She noted that the first three applicants (Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, Connections Community Support Program, and Nehemiah) are public service projects and are limited to $34,391 (15% of the total grant allocation).

After a period of discussion, members conducted a review of each grant application and provided individual scores on the CDBG Grant Application Scoring Sheet for applicants *(as on file in the Office of the City Clerk)* and staff tallied the scoring sheets.

Mr. Anderson moved to recommend awarding the City's CDBG grant allocation for public service activities to Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing in the amount of $27,000 and Connections Community Support Program in the amount of $7,391, with the remaining grant allocation to be awarded as follows: 1) $6,726 to People's Place; 2) $40,000 to Habitat for Humanity; 3) $52,892 to MHDC Homeowner Rehabilitation; 4) $35,262 to MHDC Emergency Home Repair; and 5) $60,000 to the City of Dover Homeownership Assistance Program and that priority be given to the Downtown Redevelopment Target Area as designated in the Dover Code until January 2016, with funding to be re-evaluated at that time to see if there are funds left over for the remainder of the City. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hutchison and unanimously carried.

By unanimous consent, the meeting adjourned at 4:08 p.m.

Wallace R. Dixon
Chairman

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