PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

The Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee Meeting was held on March 10, 2014, at 3:31 p.m. with Chairman Dixon presiding. Members present were Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Perza, Mr. Caldwell, and Mrs. Horsey (arrived at 3:33 p.m.).

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mr. Hutchison moved for approval of the agenda as presented, seconded by Mr. Caldwell and unanimously carried.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Allocation Recommendations for FY2014

During the Special Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting of March 18, 2013, Mr. Bonar requested that the Committee be provided assistance in the way of recommendations regarding priorities for the various applications when the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation process takes place in FY 2014, so that it could be determined if any cuts could be made or if additional funding could be sought.

Mrs. Tracey Harvey, Planner I, reviewed proposed estimated Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) allocation recommendations for Fiscal Year 2014. She indicated that the estimated grant allotment for Fiscal Year 2014 was $243,554, including program income, and that 20% of the grant would be used for Program Administration to manage the CDBG Program. Members reviewed the CDBG Federal Resources Available for Use 7/01/14 - 6/30/15, as follows:

CDBG Funds Allocation	$235,000
Anticipated Program Income	$ 8,554
Total Grant Allocation	$243,554
20% of the grant must be allocated for Program Administration	$243,554 x.20
	$ 48,711
Public Service activities cannot exceed 15% of the Grant	$243,554 x.15
	$ 36,534*

Mrs. Harvey advised members that the City had not received its grant allocation from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for FY 14, and HUD requested that grantees propose a contingency provision that will either increase or decrease the estimated funding levels to match the actual allocation amount once received from HUD. She noted that Milford Housing Development Corporation had not been included in the funding request for FY 14 due to their failure to draw down FY 12 and FY 13 funds awarded in a timely manner.

Mrs. Harvey presented the CDBG Grant Recommendations for FY14, as follows:

Homeownership Assistance Program - Recommended funding for this project is $108,409*. Funding for this project will either increase or decrease based on the actual allocation from HUD. The City will provide up to $20,000 in settlement assistance to assist low to moderate income persons that are first time homebuyers who purchase homes in the City of Dover.

Program Administration - Funding for program administration will either increase or decrease based on the actual allocation from HUD and will not exceed 20% of the total grant. Staff funded program administration at $48,711 based on the estimated allocation for the total grant. These CDBG Funds will be used to oversee management, monitoring, and coordination of the CDBG program in the City of Dover.

Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing - The request and recommendation for this project is $27,500. The funding for this project will not increase because it is a public service activity and cannot exceed 15% of the total grant allocation and funding cannot exceed the original request by the sub-grantee. Funding for this project may be decreased if the grant allocation is substantially lower than the estimated grant allocation. These CDBG funds will be used for operations costs for the building that will include utility, maintenance, and lease costs.

NCALL Research, Inc. - Recommended funding for this project is $8,934*. This project is a public service activity and subject to the 15% cap requirement. Funding for this project may also be decreased if the actual grant allocation is substantially lower than the estimated grant allocation. Funding cannot exceed the original grant request by the sub-grantee. These CDBG Funds will be used for pre-purchase homeownership counseling services relevant to Dover residents.

Elizabeth W. Murphey School - The request and recommendation for this project is $50,000. Staff requested no changes in funding for this project since it is not subject to any HUD cap requirements. These CDBG funds will be used for roof replacements for the nine (9) buildings on the campus that service children that are at risk for homelessness.

Mr. Hutchison moved to recommend approval of staff's recommendations for the CDBG Allocations for FY 2014, seconded by Mr. Caldwell and unanimously carried.

(City Clerk's Office Note: Subsequent to the meeting, a rounding error was discovered in the calculation of public service activities. As a result of this $1 error, the limit for public service activities will be reduced to $36,533; the allocation to NCALL Research, Inc. will be reduced to $8,933; and the allocation to the Homeownership Assistance Program will be increased to $108,410.)

Proposed Ordinances Amending Appendix B - Zoning, Article 3 - District Regulations

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, advised members that the proposed ordinances amending Appendix B - Zoning, Article 3 - District Regulations, were being presented at the request of Mr. John Paradee, on behalf of his clients, and that the required sponsorship from members of City Council had been obtained.

#2014-05 Amending Section 2 - General Residence Zones (RG-1 and RG-2), Subsection 2.4 - Conditional Uses (Sponsors: Bonar, Hutchison, and Lynn)

Mrs. Townshend explained that Proposed Ordinance #2014-05 would amend Section 2 - General Residence Zones (RG-1 and RG-2), Subsection 2.4 - Conditional Uses by allowing professional offices as a conditional use within the General Residence Zone on State Street and Governors Avenue between Water Street and Mary Street, and on Route 8 in its entirety. The proposed ordinance includes provisions that would protect the character of the residential area and would allow professional offices as a conditional use, subject to a public hearing and review by the Planning Commission.

Staff recommended adoption of Proposed Ordinance #2014-05.

Responding to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Townshend stated that most of the properties along State Street and Governors Avenue would be subject to the proposed amendment. She noted that the Wesley College properties are not zoned General Residence. She indicated that the proposed amendment would primarily affect the older Victorian homes along State and Division Streets; however, it was her estimation that there was not a large number of such properties.

In response to Mr. Perza regarding feedback from members of the residential communities along State Street, Governors Avenue, or Route 8 regarding this proposal, Mrs. Townshend stated that Mr. Rhett Ruggerio, the property owner who requested the proposed amendment, in conjunction with his attorney, Mr. John Paradee, met and worked very closely with the neighbors of his property (north of Division Street - Delaware Avenue, Pennsylvania Avenue, Maple Avenue, etc.) to address any concerns they may have had. Mrs Townsend reminded members that Mr. Ruggerio originally requested a rezoning; however, due to the large variety of uses allowed in the General Residence and Office (RGO) zone and not allowed in the General Residence Zone, the residents seemed more comfortable with the conditional use approach within the residential zone. She noted that owners were having difficulty selling older Victorian homes along State and Division Streets and that the proposed amendment would assure that the properties are maintained.

Mrs. Townshend explained that the process would require an application for each property to the Planning Commission and would provide required public notices and public hearings, etc. She confirmed that there were parking requirements which would be regulated through the permit process.

Mr. Hutchison moved to recommend adoption of Proposed Ordinance #2014-05, as recommended by staff, seconded by Mrs. Horsey and unanimously carried.

#2014-06 Amending Section 17 - Shopping Center Development (Permitted Uses) (Sponsors: Bonar, Hare, and Lynn)

Mrs. Townshend explained that Proposed Ordinance #2014-06 amending Section 17 - Shopping Center Development (Permitted Uses) would allow apartments and multi-family residential uses within mixed use

developments as permitted uses within the SC-3 (Regional Shopping Center) Zone. She explained that there are two (2) properties in the City with the SC-3 Regional Shopping Zone classification, the Dover Mall and the Blue Hen Mall, and that the request for the ordinance amendment was submitted on behalf of the Dover Mall.

Mrs. Townshend advised members that the proposed ordinance also included an amendment to the SC-2 (Community Shopping Center) Zone to allow light automobile maintenance, provided that vehicles not be stored on the site and that all work take place within an enclosed building. She indicated that this request was submitted by the owner of the Greentree Shopping Center and that other properties in the City with an SC-2 zoning classification that would be affected by the amendment include the North Dover Shopping Center, Value City Shopping Center, Dover Mart Shopping Center, and Metro Shopping Center.

Staff recommended adoption of Proposed Ordinance #2014-06.

Responding to Mr. Perza regarding possible environmental concerns, Mrs. Townshend stated that staff realizes that some properties are not well managed and to assure such instances are not allowed, the permitted use would be for light maintenance, entirely within a building (no maintenance done on outside of building), etc. She explained that the City would have to keep a close watch to assure that no fluids are being discharged inappropriately. Mrs. Townshend stated that if a business was not being operated properly, the City would be authorized to close the business and intermediately, the business would be notified of the violation, then fined, and if compliance was not obtained, the City would issue a provisional order. If compliance was not met at that time, she stated that the business would then be closed. She advised members that fines for commercial properties start at $50 and technically, the City can fine up to $1,000 per day.

In response to Mr. Hutchison, Mrs. Townshend assured members that compatibility issues with the adjacent properties are considered in reviewing application requests for a permitted use.

Mr. Denis McGlynn, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Dover Downs and Dover Motor Sports, advised members that the Dover Downs property is adjacent to the Dover Mall, where the proposed project would be located. He met with representatives of the Dover Mall to explain the concerns of Dover Downs, not with the subdivision or additional expansion of commercial use on the site, but with the addition of residential properties to the site. He explained that their concern was that the residential properties would only add enemies to the Speedway and this proposed residential development would be closer to Dover Downs than other existing residential areas. Allowing such a project would make a lot of residents unhappy due to the NASCAR races, NASCAR testing done throughout the summer, the Monster Racing experience that operates 60 days per year, the Firefly Music Festival, etc. He admitted that Dover Downs and Dover Motor Sports operations create noise and traffic on a regular basis and stated that it was not their desire to make life more difficult for all. Mr. McGlynn noted that the Comprehensive Plan assigned the SC-3 zoning classification for the Dover Mall property for a reason and he believed that one (1) of those reasons was due to the existence of Dover Downs.

Mr. Hutchison moved to recommend against adoption of Proposed Ordinance #2014-06 due to encroachment issues with Dover Downs, seconded by Mr. Perza and unanimously carried.

Benchmarks Established for the Economic Development Office

Mr. Bill Neaton, Economic Development Director, reviewed the benchmarks and results that were established for the Economic Development Office, which included the Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP), Downtown Dover Business Growth, and City-Wide Economic Development.

Mr. Neaton noted that the City has provided the DDP with administrative support over the last five and one-half years. He advised members that the DDP Executive Director recently resigned and that the Economic Development Office, under the direction of the Mayor, was currently providing management assistance as well. He introduced Mr. Ed Perez, Main Street Coordinator, and requested that he review the DDP benchmarks since he is more familiar with them.

Referring to the fundraising goal, Mr. Perez reported that an Acting Chairperson, Mr. Paul Lakeman, had been recruited to serve on the Organization Committee and that Mr. Greg Moore, President of the Executive Board, had been diligently recruiting Board Members who understand the DDP's situation and fundraising goals. The Board was currently awaiting the reinstatement of their 501(c)(3) status in order to move forward with fundraising.

Elaborating, Mr. Neaton explained that the DDP currently has 501(c)(6) status, which is also a not-for-profit designation; however, the contributions made to the DDP would not be tax deductible and would be if the DDP had the 501(c)(3) status.

Mr. Perez reminded members that a survey of downtown merchants and business owners was conducted annually during the month of May. It was his hope that more merchants would be involved in providing feedback this year. He assured members that once the details of the survey were completed, the data would be forwarded to them for their review and information. Mr. Neaton advised members that the merchants would be participating in the creation of the survey, including the development of the questions that would be asked.

Referring to the objective of having six (6) new businesses open in the target area, Mr. Perez stated that four (4) new businesses opened to date, which had created eight (8) new jobs. Mr. Neaton advised members that the dedication ceremony was held earlier in the day for EZ Pass, which would add an additional 85 jobs in the downtown core area. He reminded members that the DDP purchased the building at 22-24 West Loockerman Street at a Sheriff's Sale approximately two and one-half years ago. After spending a significant amount of money on remodeling the building, the DDP is pleased to have the EZ Pass as tenants. In addition to adding 85 new employees to the downtown area, he stated that EZ Pass would bring in excess of 1,000 retail visits every month. He stated that the EZ Pass location was also the Call Center for the Division of Motor Vehicles.

In regard to the City-Wide economic development initiatives, Mr. Neaton stated that his office tracks job growth and decreases, which are reported on a semi-annual basis. He indicated that the Mayor recently began having a breakfast periodically with representatives of the City's larger employers (such as Kraft Foods, Proctor and Gamble, Energizer, etc.), where he provides these firms with an update on the City's actions regarding economic development and keeps the City engaged with the business community. This has allowed for a good "round table" discussion and it was the Mayor's plan to continue to hold these meetings every six (6) months.

Mr. Neaton reminded members that City Council recently approved infrastructure improvements at the Garrison Tract and awarded two (2) bids: 1) for roads, sewer, water, and stormwater; and 2) for improving wastewater pump stations at the Garrison Tract. These projects must be completed by the end of the year in order to accommodate the two (2) new tenants: 1) Garrison Energy Center, whose project is underway; and 2) Uzin Utz, whose project is scheduled to begin in April. Mr. Neaton relayed his confidence that, once the infrastructure at the Garrison Tract was completed, additional manufacturing facilities would be attracted to the Garrison Tract, with the assistance of the Delaware Economic Development Office (DEDO) and others.

At the request of Mr. Hutchison, Mr. Neaton agreed that the Dover Air Force Base, State of Delaware, and Kent County Levy Court would be included in future breakfast meetings.

Updates - Recreation Needs Assessment

During their Regular Meeting of January 27, 2014, City Council authorized the City's Planning Department, beginning February 1, 2014, to perform a recreational needs assessment for the City of Dover, utilizing City staff to conduct workshops and other similar outreach efforts across the City to inventory park infrastructure and develop the needs of all of the City parks for future use. The objective will be to gather the necessary information from the public, study it, and make a needs assessment report back to the Committee by December 1, 2014.

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, advised members that City staff had met with representatives of the Delaware Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to review the data that needs to be developed. The State provided the City with a map and list from their database of all recreational amenities and open space within the City, which was reviewed by City staff, who will be contacting the State to provide additional information. She stated that public workshops will be scheduled during the latter part of April 2014 to allow ample time to obtain data and maps to display for the public's review. She stated that staff plans to have four (4) workshops, one (1) to be held in each Council District. The idea is for these workshops to be informal, open house events to allow individuals to review the material, ask questions, and then be permitted to provide either verbal and/or written commentary or complete a survey.

Mr. Hutchison moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Caldwell and unanimously carried.

Meeting adjourned at 4:07 p.m.

Wallace R. Dixon, Chairman

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