SPECIAL PARKS, RECREATION, AND COMMUNITY ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEE

A Special Parks, Recreation, and Community Enhancement Committee meeting was held on March 24, 2011, at 10:00 a.m. with Chairwoman Russell presiding. Members present were Dr. McGlumphy (arrived at 10:11 a.m.), Mr. Ruane (arrived at 10:29 a.m.), Mrs. Horsey, and Mr. Lewis.

AGENDA ADDITIONS/DELETIONS

Mrs. Horsey moved for approval of the agenda, seconded by Mr. Lewis 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 Fiscal Year 2011. As such, members were provided with a list of applicants, staff reports summarizing each application, a CDBG Interview Schedule, a breakdown of federal resources available for use, the total amount of grant funds requested, CDBG scoring criteria, and a 2011 CDBG Review Panel Scoring Sheet for each applicant. She 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. Mrs. Harvey explained that the numbers in parenthesis next to each measure indicate the maximum score for a given category and that the maximum total points is 100.

Mrs. Harvey advised members that the total amount of grant funds available for activities is $228,406 and explained the allocation requirements of the grant, as follows:

CDBG Funds Allocation	$270,000
Anticipated Program Income	$ 15,507
Total Grant Allocation	$285,507
20% of the grant must be allocated for Program Administration	$285,507 x.20
	$57,101
Grant Funds Available for Activities	$228,406
Total Grant Funds Requested by Applicants	$540,347

Mrs. Harvey cautioned that, according to CDBG requirements, funds awarded for public service activities cannot exceed 15% of the total grant allocation ($42,826).

Mrs. Ann Marie Townshend, Director of Planning and Community Development, advised members that until the federal budget process is complete, the funding level of the City's CDBG allocation is uncertain. She noted that the City's representative from the Department of Housing and Urban Development suggested using the City's FY 2009 allocation for budgeting purposes. Mrs. Townshend stated that members should understand that subgrant funding levels may need to be adjusted after Congress adopts a final budget.

By unanimous consent (Mr. Ruane absent during this portion of the meeting), members agreed that they would abide by a procedure adopted in previous years whereby applications that receive fewer than 70 points in the scoring process would be removed from consideration.

Oral Presentations

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

Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing

Ms. Jeanine Kleimo, Chair, Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing (DIMH), reviewed a grant application in the amount of $46,000. 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 has opened a shelter at 684 Forest Street in Dover which can accommodate up to 36 lodgers. She stated that the 4,800 square-foot building is leased from the Downtown Dover Partnership and was renovated using a previous $60,000 CDBG award from the City of Dover. Ms. Kleimo noted that all shelter guests are assessed for counseling, treatment, and employment needs and referrals are made to local agencies that provide for mental health and addiction counseling, and social services. She advised members that the shelter program is one of Dover's largest volunteer efforts and is well-supported and accepted by the community. Ms. Kleimo stated that DIMH's grant request is for operating funds for the building, including utility and lease costs.

In response to Mr. Lewis, Ms. Kleimo stated that very few shelter guests return for additional services, estimating that approximately 15-20 of the 400 individuals served were returnees. She noted that these guests were granted an additional 30-day stay and provided further counseling. She reiterated that the goal of the DIMH is to shelter and feed men and restore them as productive members of the community.

First State Resource Conservation and Development Council

Mr. Frederick Traute, Manager, Home Repair Project, First State Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc. (RC & D) reviewed a grant application, in the amount of $50,000, for funding for the organization's Emergency Home Repair Program. He explained that this program provides assistance to low-income homeowners to eliminate conditions in their homes that are an immediate threat to the occupants' health, safety, or security. Mr. Traute noted that RC & D provides materials and volunteers or contractors to complete repairs with no cost to the homeowner. He emphasized that these repairs are much needed and that receipt of the organization's services is often the occupant's last resort before becoming homeless. Mr. Traute explained that, if the CDBG funds are secured, RC & D expects to carry out repairs on up to 20 low-income, owner-occupied homes in the City over the next 12 months and plans to average three (3) completions per quarter.

In response to Mrs. Russell, Mr. Traute indicated that current program guidelines permit RC & D to spend up to $5,000 per year on homes. He emphasized that RC & D is not an ongoing maintenance program and that staff encourages owners to take responsibility for maintaining their homes in good repair after services are provided.

Connections Community Support Program

Mr. Chris Devaney, Vice President of Operations, and Mr. Brad Milton, Director of Homeless Program, Connections Community Support Programs, Inc. (Connections), reviewed a grant application in the amount of $20,000. Mr. Devaney explained that Connections was founded in 1985 primary medical, mental health and substance abuse treatment, employment, and housing opportunities and to help individuals and families receiving services to become accepted and productive members of their communities. He noted that CDBG funds would be used to increase homeless shelter capacity in Dover by providing motel vouchers for homeless individuals and families who have no other immediate housing alternatives.

Mr. Devaney stated that Connections also proposes to use CDBG funds to offer an alternative to emergency shelter during the coldest nights of the year by operating a homeless café in the City from December 15, 2011 through March 15, 2012, replicating a similar Connections program in Wilmington. He noted that this facility would serve individuals who are unwilling or unable to stay in traditional shelters due to fear, mental health problems, or other barriers. Mr. Devaney noted that it is proposed to use Connections' Dover Homeless Outreach Center, which currently provides daytime outreach services for the homeless, for this purpose. He stated that this facility is located at 621 W. Division Street.

In response to Mr. Ruane, Mrs. Townshend indicated that the current zoning of the Division Street property would not permit use as a homeless café. Mr. Devaney stated that Connections would be willing to consider another property owned by the organization, located at 696 S. Bay Road, as an alternative location.

Mr. Ruane suggested that Connections staff explore the possibility of linking services with the Dover Public Library, noting that the Library has an employment counselor and could also benefit from outreach efforts made to the homeless in the area.

Diamond State Community Land Trust

Mr. Van Temple, Executive Director, Diamond State Community Land Trust (DSCLT), reviewed a grant application in the amount of $40,000. Mr. Temple explained that DSCLT was founded in 2006 to create permanent, affordable housing for individuals who are 60% below the area median income. He noted that, under the DSCLT model, homeowners purchase the home; however, DSCLT retains ownership of the land. Mr. Temple indicated that DSCLT clients sign 99-year renewable leases for exclusive rent of the land for a set, below-market fee. He stressed that, under this model, DSCLT homes are made affordable for the first time buyer and for future buyers of the property. Mr. Temple stated that CDBG funds would be used to purchase two (2) vacant, foreclosed homes in Northwest Dover Heights, Lincoln Park, or surrounding areas for low-income families. He noted that one (1) of the criteria for selecting homes would be the roof orientation and size, so that solar panels could be installed to generate electricity and heat for hot water.

Mr. Temple provided members an updated economic summary for their review ***(Attachment #1).***

Mr. Ruane requested that staff provide members a list of homes in the City that have been rehabilitated by DSCLT.

Elizabeth W. Murphey School. Inc.

Mr. Michael Kopp, Executive Director, The Elizabeth W. Murphey School, Inc., reviewed a grant application in the amount of $49,347. He advised members that the Elizabeth Murphey School is a group home that serves neglected and abused homeless children. Mr. Kopp noted that the State has requested the Murphey School to open an additional building to serve children who need emergency placement. He stated that this building will house children as young as six (6) years of age who are homeless and also have mental health concerns that will be addressed through school staff and the services of other area professionals.

Mr. Kopp indicated that the cost of providing heat and moderate air conditioning to school buildings has severely impacted the organization's ability to serve more children and that conversion to geothermal heating is crucial to the organization's financial stability. Mr. Kopp advised members that the CDBG funds will be used to provide a geothermal unit which will provide heat, hot water, and air conditioning to a building which will accommodate children placed in the Murphey School's care on an emergency basis.

Downtown Dover Partnership

Mr. William Neaton, Executive Director, and Mr. Ed Perez, Coordinator, Downtown Dover Partnership (DDP), reviewed a grant application in the amount of $42,000. Mr. Neaton explained that CDBG funds were requested for the development of microenterprises in the Downtown Dover area. He stated that funds would be used to provide: 1) grants, loans, loan guarantees and other forms of financial support; 2) technical assistance, advice, and business services; 3) general support to owners of microenterprises and persons developing microenterprises including child care, transportation, counseling and peer support groups; and 4) training and technical assistance or other support services to increase the capacity of small business owners.

In response to Mrs. Russell, Mr. Neaton noted that many small businesses fail due to lack of a solid business plan, lack of funds, or lack of proper marketing. He stated that, with the use of CDBG funds, the DDP hopes to provide assistance in these three (3) areas to microenterprises.

In response to Mrs. Russell, Mr. Perez requested that any negative reviews of the DDP be brought to the attention of Mr. Neaton promptly so that they can be addressed.

Responding to Mrs. Russell, Mr. Neaton stated that the DDP is responsive to all prospective business developers who approach the organization for assistance, including minorities.

In response to Mr. Ruane, Mr. Perez indicated that the Small Business Administration would provide technical assistance to the DDP in administering a loan program. Mr. Neaton added that $25,000 in the current departmental budget has been allocated to the DDP's Incentive and Loan Program Subcommittee, and that guidelines and procedures for loan administration are under development.

In response to Mr. Ruane, Mr. Neaton stated that the $42,000 allocation requested would be supplemental to the $25,000 currently budgeted for a loan program. He indicated that $28,000 of the CDBG funds requested would be dedicated to loans and $14,000 to providing technical assistance to loan recipients to assist them in managing their businesses.

In response to Dr. McGlumphy, Mr. Neaton stated that CDBG funds will not be used to supplant funding granted to the DDP by the City of Dover.

In response to Mrs. Harvey, Mr. Neaton explained that staff would be responsible for providing documentation related to job creation and retention for the life of the loan.

In response to Mrs. Horsey, Mr. Perez stated that the statistics provided regarding the percentage of low-to-moderate income individuals to be served reflect that individuals who wish to start businesses must qualify for loans and, therefore, typically have some capital.

By unanimous consent, the meeting recessed at 12:06 p.m. and reconvened at 12:42 p.m.

City of Dover - Streets Project

Mr. Scott Koenig, Public Services Manager/Director of Public Works, reviewed a grant application for the City of Dover Streets Project - Concrete and Pavement Rehabilitation in the amount of $203,000. He stated that the proposed locations for rehabilitation include South New Street, Janes Road, and Mays Lane, noting that these locations must be confirmed with census data to ensure that residents of these areas are on a low or moderate income census track. Mr. Koenig explained that the proposed work on South New Street would include the removal and replacement of old and deteriorated concrete sidewalks, curbs, and drains; however, concrete rehabilitation on Janes Road and Mays Lane would be limited to drainage structures. He stated that the pavement surface would be milled and repaved at all three (3) locations and accessibility improvements would be made at all practical locations. Mr. Koenig noted that receiving CDBG funds would allow staff to leverage additional funds for an overall City street program. He advised members that the investment would be expected to last 15-20 years and would have an immediate and long-term impact for residents in the area.

Mr. Ruane noted that the targeted sections of Janes Road and Mays Lane are situated in isolated and neglected portions of the City which are not likely to receive State support.

Housing Rehabilitation Program

Mrs. Tracy Harvey, Community Development Manager, reviewed a grant application, in the amount of $50,000, for the City of Dover Housing Rehabilitation Program. She indicated that this program provides repairs on owner-occupied homes for low-to-moderate income individuals and assists in bringing these homes up to code. She stated that there is a high demand for this program, noting that the waiting list has been closed since 2009; however, she still receives several calls weekly from interested individuals. Mrs. Harvey noted that the project will focus

on preserving existing housing stock in the City, with the goal of rehabilitating four (4) to (5) homes, using up to $15,000 per household to perform needed repairs. Mrs. Harvey advised members that this program would be severely impacted if not funded during this grant cycle.

Homeownership Assistance Program

Mrs. Tracey Harvey, Community Development Manager, reviewed a grant application, in the amount of $40,000, 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 members that there is a high demand for this program and that CDBG funds would be used to provide up to $10,000 each to four (4) first-time homebuyers to assist in the purchase of properties in the City. She noted that all purchasers must complete a homeownership counseling session with the National Council on Agricultural Life and Labor Research, Inc. (NCALL) before signing a sales contract.

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

Members reviewed and discussed the various CDBG grant applications to develop a score for each applicant.

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. Ruane moved that the full amount of CDBG funds permitted for public service activities ($43,826) be dedicated for this purpose, seconded by Mrs. Horsey and unanimously carried.

Dr. McGlumphy moved to consider those applications addressing public service activities (Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing, Connections Community Support Program, and the Downtown Dover Partnership) separately from the non-public service applications, seconded by Mr. Ruane and unanimously carried.

Mr. Lewis moved to recommend that $10,000 of the City's CDBG grant allocation be distributed to Community Connections Support Program and the remaining non-public service funds be awarded to the Dover Interfaith Mission for Housing.

Mrs. Horsey moved to amend the motion by decreasing the amount of funds to be awarded to Community Connections Support Program to $5,000, seconded by Mr. Lewis. The motion to recommend that $5,000 of the City's CDBG grant allocation be distributed to Community Connections Support Program and the remaining non-public services funds ($37,826) be awarded to the Dover Interfaith Mission unanimously carried.

Members then scored the CDBG applications for non-public service programs.

Based on the scoring of the grant applications by the Committee, Mr. Ruane moved to recommend approval of the distribution of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) monies for non-public service programs as follows:

Applicant	Amount Requested	Amount Recommended
R C & D	$ 40,000	$ 40,000
City of Dover Streets Program	$ 203,000	$ 65,580
City of Dover Community Development Projects:		
Housing Rehabilitation Program	$ 50,000	$ 40,000
Homeownership Assistance Program	$ 40,000	$ 40,000

The motion was seconded by Mr. Lewis and carried with a vote of four (4) yes, and one (1) no (Dr. McGlumphy).

Dr. McGlumphy stated that he disagreed with the CDBG allocation process and did not believe that the City should be involved in the process in this manner.

Mr. Ruane moved to include a stipulation that all funds recommended for distribution to the City of Dover Streets program be allocated to the rehabilitation of South New Street, seconded by Mrs. Horsey and carried with a vote of four (4) yes and (1) abstention (Dr. McGlumphy).

Mrs. Horsey moved for adjournment, seconded by Mr. Lewis and unanimously carried.

Meeting Adjourned at 1:58 P.M.

Respectfully submitted,

Sophia R. Russell
Chairwoman

SR/JS/ac/dd/tm
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Attachment
Attachment #1 - Diamond State Community Land Trust Economic Summary, Dated March 24, 2011