

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT  
ECONOMIC AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING  
MARCH 25, 2013**

**ATTENDANCE:** Council Member M. Brantley, Co-Chair; Council Member L. Martinez, Co-Chair; Council Member M. Lyons; Council Member W. Blunt; Council Member J. Banta (6:48 p.m.)

**STAFF:** Tyler Fairbairn; Alanna Kabel; Mona, Dept. of Community Development

**CALL TO ORDER**

Co-Chair Martinez called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m. A quorum was present. Members introduced themselves to all present. Applications #1-21 for City of Bridgeport Departments will be heard this evening. They will start with applications from OPED #'s 10 – 14.

**10. Community Capital/OPED Storefronts** – Mr. Bill Coleman and Ms. Anne Robinson from Community Capital presented. Mr. Coleman said the project has 3 guiding principles: 1) Use the dollars to make an impact in a concentration of storefronts located in a visible area 2) Partner with others willing to invest for the same reasons, i.e. Community Capital, Downtown Special Services District, private partners in distinct neighborhoods such as East Main Street, Wood Avenue 3) Integration – invest in areas where the City is spending additional dollars such as sidewalk improvements. The City will partner with Community Capital to administer the dollars and provide technical assistance and expertise to the business owners to improve their businesses.

Ms. Lyons asked if the city wants to change the businesses or do the businesses want the change. Mr. Coleman said it is the City's response to the businesses wanting help. The money will be taking roll downs off, putting up awnings, clearing the windows.

Mr. Blunt said it is basically a street makeover and asked for expansion to Reservoir Avenue.

Ms. Martinez asked what happened to the money for the East Side. Mr. Coleman said the money is still there, and there are 3 projects under contract in one block on the East Side.

Mr. Coleman also said there is a great new product, when applied to the inside of glass windows, will protect the stores from gunfire.

Ms. Brantley asked if any private business owners have come forward with their own money. Mr. Coleman said it varies from business to business. Ms. Brantley said they should be contributing some of their own money. Ms. Brantley asked Mr. Coleman to send the committee a list of businesses that have contributed to enhancement of their properties. Mr. Coleman said he will do that.

Mr. Banta joined the meeting.

**11 – 14. OPED Blight, NRZ and BeGreen Projects** – Mr. David Kooris, Mr. Chris Rosario and Ms. Debbie Simms presented. Ms. Simms provided a map indicating the location of NRZ projects over the last 5 years all around the city. Mr. Rosario said this year they are looking to demolish 2 blighted properties in each NRZ zone, and replace with a park or other as requested by the neighborhood. Mr. Kooris said they have been working on prioritizing projects and setting objectives going forward.

Ms. Brantley asked why the Upper East Side NRZ application was separate. Mr. Kooris said the Upper East Side is still in the planning stage, and is not eligible for implementation dollars. He said this is the last area that is eligible based on current demographics.

Ms. Brantley asked what would happen if they did not get the Planning dollars. Mr. Kooris said they would not be able to get started on the planning part which will eventually establish it as an NRZ.

Ms. Brantley asked who they would call for illegal dumping in their neighborhood. Mr. Rosario said they are the department to call, and that they are looking to hire private investigators to work on areas especially hit by illegal dumping.

Mr. Blunt asked how many houses are waiting for demo right now. Mr. Rosario said there are 15-20 right now.

**1. Lighthouse Program – Youth Service Bureau Match** – Ms. Valerie Sorrentino presented. Asking for \$50,000 will leverage an equal amount from YSB Grant. They will be issuing an RFP in April to choose programs going forward. The 6 programs receiving funds currently are: Bpt. Public Education Fund, Bpt. YMCA, Council of Churches, GBAPP, Girls Scouts of CT and The Kennedy Center.

The committee stressed the need to reach out to all agencies in the City to make sure they all know when the RFP is released. More technical assistance is needed for all programs in the city to have a chance to apply for these funds. Ms. Martinez said putting an ad in

the paper is not enough. Ms. Brantley asked them to network in the community, involve and communicate with the City Council people.

Mr. Blunt asked them to use all resources to reach kids. He asked if local universities are involved in any of these programs. Ms. Sorrentino said she would find out and get back to him.

**2. CoB Lead Free Families – Lead Hazard Program** – Ms. Sabine Kuczo presented. She said this is a required match to the three year, \$3 Million grant from the federal government. This is the last year of the current 3 yr. grant. The money is used for lead remediation, Healthy Homes Initiative, and free smoke and carbon monoxide detectors thru partnership with the UI. The goal over the 3 years is to remediate 210 homes. They are now at 119 with 1 year left in the grant.

Mr. Blunt said the Health Dept. does the screening, intervention and enforcement piece, and Ms. Kuczo does the Housing piece.

Ms. Kuczo also provided a map showing the location of all of the homes that have benefitted from the program.

**3. CoB Parks Dept. – Senior Leisure and Healthy Lifestyle** – Ms. Luann Conine presented. She said this is the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the pilot program to outfit a gym for the Seniors at the Eisenhower Center. The equipment will move with the Center when they move to the new building.

This money would be used for floor mats and wall mirrors.

Ms. Brantley said she thought the Seniors would continue to have access to the gym at the pool in the current building. Ms. Kabel said she would check the arrangement with the developer, Mr. Kuchma and get back to the committee.

Mr. Blunt asked if they are any new programs for the youth in Bridgeport. They curfew for city youth is coming up on 6 months and they are always looking for programs for the young people to stay busy.

**4. CoB – Parks Dept. – Tree Planting Program** – Mr. Steve Hladun presented. He said in the past year they have planted trees in the Hollow, East Side, East End, West Side, South End, Downtown and North End. The trees complement the streetscapes; they have partnered with Green Works and have expanded Youthworks to Harding, Central and Bassick.

Ms. Brantley asked if there was any program to help homeowners that have trees with roots bubbling up the sidewalks in the front of their property. Mr. Hladun said the

homeowner can call BConnected and the Parks Dept. can investigate. Right now it is the homeowner's responsibility to maintain and repair the sidewalks.

**5. CoB – Parks Dept. – Public Parks Improvement** - Mr. Steve Hladun presented. He reviewed the projects that are under construction this year including new playground equipment, tennis courts, new landscaping, and benches.

Ms. Lyons asked what the money would be used for. Mr. Hladun said approx. \$40,000 would be used for design documents and survey work required to go to bid. Approx. \$430,000 would be used for site work, earth moving, concrete, equipment, safety improvements, benches and plantings. The pricing is based on figures from previous projects.

Ms. Martinez said these projects should also come out of the capital budget.

Mr. Blunt asked if there was a plan for Rogers Park, it would not require a lot of money.

Mr. Banta asked what type of trees would be planted. Mr. Hladun explained the program.

**15. CoB Dept. on aging – Senior Center Golden Hill Street** – Ms. Rose Hoyt presented. She said the center is for LMI Seniors and they provide nutrition, transportation, social services, health services, a swimming pool, ceramics class and other programs. The money requested is for salary for 2 part-time receptionists and office and ceramic class supplies.

**6. CoB Veteran's/Disability – Food Pantry** – Ms. Milta Feliciano presented. She handed out pictures and information. She is asking for \$10,000 to continue operating the Food pantry for Veteran's and people with Disabilities. She said in the last 6 months they have provided 603 families, 868 people, with 17,600 meals.

**7. East Side Senior Center – Supplies** - Ms. Martha Santiago presented. She is requesting money for supplies for the many programs they provide at the East Side Senior Center. Last year they served 2,944 seniors with numerous events, trips, etc.

**8. East Side Senior Center – Rent** – Ms. Martha Santiago presented. This money is requested for the yearly rent including utilities in order to operate the East Side Senior Center. Ms. Kabel stated the City was looking for another location in the East Side to relocate this Senior Program, along with other City Depts.

**9. CoB Social services – Emergency Rental Assistance** – Ms. Iris Molina presented. She stated there is a need for gap services for people in middle income who need one-time help when they fall behind in their rent or utilities due to illness, car repair or other

short term lack of income. This could possibly prevent them, and especially their children and family members, from becoming homeless. It would be a one-time help– no repeat applicants. She said her office gets 20 calls a week from people seeking help or from landlords who are trying to help their tenants.

**16 and 17. CoB Housing and Community Development – Housing Program Delivery Costs and Program Administration** – Mr. Tyler Fairbairn presented. He said these two applications were for money to cover Salary and Planning & Administrative Costs for the Department. The Planning and Admin. Dollars are the max allowed by HUD. It is possible they will see a 5-9% cut by HUD. The Program Administration Application also includes the \$40,000 application from the Upper East Side NRZ for Planning costs.

**18. CoB Housing and Community Development – Homeowner Rehab Program** – Mr. Tyler Fairbairn presented. He stated the Dept. is now working to keep the money previously awarded. Ms. Kabel said this money could be used for “Block by Block” beautification program, or a sidewalk program. Previous year award has benefitted 14 property owners with interior rehabilitation.

**19. CoB Housing and Community Development – Program Administration for HESG** - Mr. Tyler Fairbairn presented. He stated this will cover the salary for the administration of the HESG Program in the City.

**20. CoB Housing and Community Development – Program Administration for HOPWA** - Mr. Tyler Fairbairn presented. He stated this will cover the salary for the administration of the HOPWA Program in the City.

**21. CoB Housing and Community Development – Section 108 Loan Obligation** – Mr. Tyler Fairbairn presented. He said this is money earmarked as loan repayment for 3 loans used in the 1980’s for the Marin Garfield Firehouse, LEDSCO, and the Grow Bridgeport Fund. These payments must be made according to a set repayment schedule.

**\*\* MR. BANTA MADE A MOTION TO ADJOURN**

**\*\* MR. BLUNT SECONDED**

**\*\* MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY**

Meeting was adjourned at 8:45 pm.

Jill Kuzmich  
Telesco Secretarial Services