

BUSINESS & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Tuesday, March 8, 2016 5:15 PM
City Council Chambers

MINUTES

Committee Members Present: Committee Chair Councilor Graham, Councilors Durgin, Nichols

City Staff Present: Tanya Emery, Cathy Conlow, Norman Heitmann, Paul Nicklas, Tyler Collins, Zeth Lundy

Chair Graham called the meeting to order at 5:15 pm.

- 1. PUBLIC HEARING** – Amount of Federal Community Development Block Grant Funds expected to be available for the Period July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 and the Eligible Uses of Community Development Funds (see attached Memo, Exhibit A & Exhibit B)

First hearing, this year's allocation is down slightly (about \$7,000) from last year, est. \$771,681, as well as anticipating \$250,000 program income to total \$1,021.681.

Worked on property acquisition, demolition and clearance, social services and non-profit funding, public improvements such as streets and sidewalks, business development and façade grants, property rehab and homeowner assistance, as well as neighborhood stabilization.

To date, 1 acquisition, demolition of 1 commercial building (#487) at BIA, demolition of 4 residential structures, as well as Jeff overseeing 3 additional demolitions, and funded 3 downtown facades. July was the last month that Park Woods was funded.

Public improvements to Central and Harlow Sts., as well as contributions to pavement on Ohio St, 2 streets in the West Side Village, as well as 4 sidewalks in the West Side Village. We rehabilitated 2 single family homes, 5 West Side Village homes, provided closing cost assistance to one person, as well as providing down payment assistance to 2 people. Non-profit assistance was provided to two entities; Penquis and Community Housing of Maine.

Regarding CDBG funding, all activities must be eligible meeting 1 out of 3 national objectives 1) LMI (low/middle income), 70% of funding each year should go to this category, 2) slum and blight, and 3) urgent need.

Potential activities for this funding include continued residential rehabilitation, financing and administration, planning and design of community development projects, business development assistance and façade grants, acquisition, demolition and clearance of properties, ADA access and improvements, streets and sidewalks and non-profit program grants.

Next public hearing 05.03.16, and residents may also submit comments in writing to Tyler Collins via City Hall 2nd Floor. Materials are available for review also by contacting Tyler.

These funds need to be used within 12 months. The façade grant is open through 04.01.16. Information has been released regarding this grant and the public is aware.

No public comments received. Counselor Graham inquired if we had public comments regarding this before. Director Emery reported that we had, but we can certainly attempt to do more community outreach. Counselor Graham states that the grant is a great opportunity, and helps the city look better.

Councilor Durgin stated that the AARP study on age friendly communities might factor into some of these projects.

Motion to close this portion of the hearing by Councilor Durgin; seconded by Councilor Nichols.

2. Amending City's 2007 Public Art and Monument Policy (see attached Memo)

Chair of the Commission on Cultural Development, Kierie Piccininni spoke regarding the 2007 Public Art and Monument Policy, and how the policy does not include guidelines on the following:

- What constitutes a public monument/art?
- Public safety?
- Maintenance – if monument/art is damaged? What if monument/art falls of its base? Preservation techniques for specific materials used for monument/art?
- How work is acquired? Donated, commissioned? What is the process of making a fair market value of a piece of work?
- Deaccessing of work – relocating the art/monument, destruction/modification of art/monument, art/monument is more than the city can maintain, ambassador of group overseeing can't maintain art/monument, trade/sell art/monument?

Councilor Durgin asked if there was an example that could be used. Chair Piccininni stated that the Continuity of Community Sculpture by Clark Battle Fitzgerald could be used as an example, as it was relocated from City Hall to West Market Square. Approximately 3 years ago, this piece was moved to the Waterfront. The Commission did exhaustive research last winter to learn about the history of the work and the artist. The Commission learned that in 1984, this work fell off its base, and it was welded on with diamond-tread plates by the City. No preservation techniques have been provided to us by the artist, or the materials that were used in creation of this sculpture. When Clark Battle Fitzgerald saw this sculpture 3 years later, he was very upset because the repairs didn't match his work. This can ultimately lower the value of the art/monument, and The Commission wants to be sure it's in line with what the artist intends.

Councilor Graham asked Chair Piccininni is there was a current inventory and detail on all art/monuments in the City. Chair Piccininni reports that this has been an ongoing side project for approximately 1.5 years, and that the ultimate goal is to have a dossier of the history and artist's intention of each piece. Chair Piccininni thanks the Bangor Public Library for help gathering information, articles, and DVDs on art/monuments. Green light provided to finish up this project.

3. Commission on Cultural Development Request to Apply for Grants (see attached Memo)

Chair Piccininni requested a change to this memo, states that the 1st & 3rd amounts should indicate "up to/not to exceed." Seeking funding to continue Artober, which was a council approved goal. Artober had 60+ participating; with approximately 8-10,000 attendees. This grant would sustain Artober for 3-5 additional years. Artplace America would provide \$77,500 for five years, which is the first draft of this grant. A vote would be needed to continue this process, finish drafting the grant, review with staff and submit the proposal.

Councilor Graham inquired about last year's Artober, stating that there wasn't a lot of reporting back. Chair Piccininni stated that annual report should be available soon. A council order and council action would be drafted for Monday 03.14.16.

Councilor Nichols moved to pass, Councilor Durgin seconded. Vote unless doubted, no doubt.

4. **REFERRAL – COUNCIL ORDINANCE 16-088**, Amending Chapter 165, Land Development Code, of the Code of the City of Bangor, By Amending Provisions Dealing with Nonconformities (see attached Memo, Council Action and Council Ordinance)

Paul Nicklas, Assistant City Solicitor spoke regarding the need for minor updates to this Land Development Code, to allow retaining non-conforming use as long as use is not changed to another, destroyed, or vacant for 7 years. If vacant for 1 year, currently, cannot retain non-conforming use. Many cases, such as with foreclosures, properties are sitting dormant beyond 1 year. The previous time period was 10 years, which last month, the Planning Board passed a vote of 4 to 2 to change this period to 7 years. Foreclosures can take upwards of 5-7 years, and this is a happy medium of the 10 years previously. Staff feels that 7 years is okay, and that there would be more of a push to complete the changes sooner.

Councilor Durgin moved, Councilor Nichols seconded. Vote unless doubted, no doubt.

5. Sign Proposal – Bangor Rotary (materials provided at meeting)

Director Emery discussed the development and proposal brought by Steve Rich with Bangor Rotary, regarding a welcome sign to be placed in the rotary at Maine Ave and Godfrey Blvd. This area is already maintained by the Bangor Rotary, and it would provide recognition to the Rotary's beautification effects for Bangor.

The sign ordinance was attached, however, this would be an "intra-community sign," a specialty sign, at which the Council has the ability to determine the appropriateness.

Director Emery stated that she'd like to continue to work with the Rotary to adjust the design, as it might not be the exact design aesthetic for that area. Director Emery loved the concept, and understands that there is a time crunch to spend this money from the Rotary.

Councilor Graham acknowledged the gracious opportunity by Rotary, as well as his concerns regarding the sign location and visibility.

Request to approve Rotary's intent, and conditionally accept these funds aided by our own efforts. We will continue to work on the functional concept of this design.

Councilor Durgin moved, Councilor Nichols seconded. Vote unless doubted, no doubt.

6. New Staff Members – Zeth Lundy was in attendance at this meeting and was introduced as the new Downtown Coordinator and Cultural Liaison, and he'll be integral with the Downtown Bangor Partnership.

Additionally, Director Emery welcomed Mel Bickford as the new Administrative Assistant, as well as Jennifer King, the new Development Coordinator who will be working as the internal/external point person on projects.

The Community & Economic Development Department is back to full staff!

7. **Executive Session** – Economic Development – Property Disposition – 1 M.R.S.A. § 405(6)(C) (Confidential Memo provided separately)

Councilor Durgin motioned for Executive Session, Councilor Nichols seconded at approx. 5:58 pm.

8. Committee Action on Above Item – approval of the staff recommendation was moved by Councilor Durgin, seconded by Councilor Nichols. Vote unless doubted, no doubt.

Meeting was adjourned at 6:05pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa L. Bickford
Administrative Assistant
Community & Economic Development