



City of
GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Roxann Wedegartner
Mayor

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Minutes of CDBG PUBLIC HEARING
April 29, 2021 at 12:00 p.m.
Remote, Via WebEx

Call to Order at 12:03 p.m. by Lindsay Rowe

Attending:

Lindsay Rowe, Community Development Administrator, City of Greenfield
MJ Adams, Director of Economic and Community Development, City of Greenfield
Robin Fordham, Grant Program Assistant, City of Greenfield
Trenda Loftin, Worker-Owner, Compost Collective
Revan Schendler, Worker-Owner, Compost Collective
Carl Woodruff, resident of Greenfield and Easthampton

Rowe stated the purpose of this public hearing is to receive public comment on:

ongoing grant implementation of activities funded through the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 awards; and revising the City's 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to undertake a "Substantial Housing Rehabilitation" activity which will pair CDBG funds with additional grant funds (Gateway Housing Rehabilitation) to make extensive repairs to 2-4 unit properties (owner-occupied or investor-owned). This activity will use the City's current Housing Rehabilitation Program's processes and policies, which provides 0% deferred payment loans to make critical property improvements to homes/apartments occupied by low/moderate income households. Information on the City's Housing Rehabilitation Program can be found at: <https://greenfield-ma.gov/housingrehab>.

Rowe provides updates to open CDBG grant years.

FY17 – Grant in the close out process, all activities have been completed.

FY18 – Grant in progress, most activities completed

- Housing Rehab
 - Four units have been completed, with a goal of three (3)
 - Code Compliance (ongoing) – have not seen the same need due to COVID relief funds and programs

- Microenterprise forgivable loans – six (6) awards totaling \$30,000 – not seeing interest in these loans as the CDBG-CV funds for Microenterprise provide larger loans and there is almost \$300,000 still available funding under that program.
- Infrastructure
 - GCET broadband infrastructure (complete)
 - 188 Main building demolition (canceled)
- Social Services
 - Center for Self Reliance food pantry (complete)
 - Center on Aging senior nutrition programming (complete)

FY 19 – Grant in progress

- Housing Rehab: two (2) units have been completed, with a goal of three (3) (ongoing)
- Microenterprise forgivable loans – ten (10) awards totaling \$49,757
- Infrastructure
 - Hope St. Sidewalks (complete)
 - West Street Water/Sewer plan design (complete)
 - GCET broadband infrastructure/Leyden Woods (ongoing)
- Social Services
 - Center for Self Reliance food pantry (ongoing)
 - Center on Aging senior nutrition programming (cancelled due to COVID)
 - LifePath senior meals (ongoing)

FY20 – Grant in start-up

- Infrastructure
 - West Street Water Sewer Drainage, out to bid (to start shortly)
- Downtown Revitalization, to be completed in conjunction with Local Rapid Recovery Program
- Social Services – working on contracting
 - Center for Self Reliance food pantry
 - LifePath
 - Literacy Project
 - Council on Aging

CV20 – Grant in progress

- Microenterprise forgivable loans - \$600,00 funding
 - So far granted 37 awards, totaling \$303,760.25

Rowe explained that the City is requesting the approval of a reallocation of unexpended funds in FY18 (from Code Compliance, Microenterprise, 188 Main Demolition) into a new activity, “Substantial Housing Rehabilitation,” to be paired with funds from the Gateway Housing Program grant. This new activity will allow the City to dedicate more funds to multi-family rehab projects than the current Housing Rehabilitation activity.

Rowe invited public comment.

Loftin spoke in support of the reallocation of funds, saying she was delighted by the City and community members' enthusiasm for housing initiatives. She feels this is a great opportunity for City of Greenfield to show alignment with the desire and needs of community. To have support would be great not only for constituents, but also as example for other communities.

Schendler explained that the Compost Collective is a business based in Greenfield and in operation since 2018, and was developed inside Greenfield jail to create employment opportunities and ownership opportunities for those coming out of jail. After several years they realized affordable housing was an issue along with employment needs. Workers need access to safe affordable housing in Greenfield; current market rate is not affordable for these workers. Incarceration in MA costs \$70,000 a year. With many groups aligning to prevent a return to incarceration, City's investment will come back to the community by less money being diverted into the prison system, and will be returned to the community through tax receipts, and the improvement of dilapidated housing

Woodruff commented that funds directed toward the Compost Collective would make a significant difference in the longevity of the housing project they are working on, as well as abate hazards. This would allow for housing units with low-maintenance needs long term. Appreciate the opportunity to be considered for funding.

Hearing no further public comment, Rowe closed the hearing at 12:17 p.m.

