



Roxann Wedegartner
Mayor

City of
GREENFIELD, MASSACHUSETTS

**COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

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Minutes of CDBG PUBLIC HEARING
December 2, 2020 at 12:00 p.m.
Remote, Via WebEx

Call to Order at 12:05 p.m. by Lindsay Rowe

Attending:

Lindsay Rowe, Community Development Administrator, City of Greenfield

Robin Fordham, Grant Program Assistant, City of Greenfield

Nancy Hazard, Chair of the SGIC

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

1. Social Service and infrastructure priorities for the City's 2021 Mini-Entitlement Program application, including West Street reconstruction;
2. Ongoing grant implementation of activities funded through the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 awards;
3. Revising program activities funded with CDBG18 to support services to homeless individuals designed to respond to needs caused by the COVID pandemic.

Social Service and infrastructure priorities for FY21

Rowe shared the current draft of the 2021 Community Development Strategy. Reviewed traditional priorities/others by rank. End of table shows recently completed projects. Community Development Strategy provides framework to discuss needs in community, and explain funding priorities with state.

For FY21 grant areas, for infrastructure we are looking to 1 fund one or two projects. West St. Phase II originally planned for FY21, but reworking of Main Street has been fast-tracked, so might be possible for this grant. Looking for feedback on priorities for social services funding.

NH: Housing question, Housing Rehab priority has dropped, curious why. Housing also mentioned in social services, clarify?

LR: Housing Rehab (HR) is repair oriented; social services is household stabilization and homelessness services, e.g., supplementing rent or utilities. Prioritization, traditionally 80-90k to social services annually, there is a limit to how much City can spend on social services (but HR is not limited in the same way).

Ongoing grant implementation

For CDBG COVID microenterprise grant funding (for business of 5 or fewer employees with income eligible owners), we have 600k to provide to eligible businesses. So far have received 37 applications, approved 16 thus far, expended \$117k, with a goal to assist 60 businesses (likely to exceed 60).

NH: And there is a cap on grant of 10k?

LR: Yes. Not everyone requests or qualifies for full \$10k.

NH: And these are grants, not loans?

LR: These are forgivable loans. First awarded as loan, then recipient can qualify to have loan forgiven if they comply with spending rules.

The FY17 grant is almost closed, all activities have completed (projects included 6 units of HR, improved accessibility at Garden Cinema, several Streets & Sidewalks projects, architectural barrier removal at Lunt field, pocket park at garage; and social services for the food pantry, summer youth employment, and nutrition and wellness for elders).

The FY18 is currently open. Completed HR (goal of 3 units, completed 4); code compliance program for landlords is ongoing (recently hired staff person to assist); commercial improvement for the FNB stabilization, was repurposed into microenterprise assistance (\$5k for eligible businesses, have awarded \$30k out of \$40k available so far); GCET expansion; 188 Main demolition; and social services funding for food pantry and nutrition/wellness for elder.

For FY19, HR goal is 3 units, so far we've completed one emergency roof, one rehab/lead abatement project is ongoing, and looking to pair one project with Gateway for a multi-family property. Funding for the FNB was reallocated to microenterprise support, \$50k (almost all awarded), infrastructure projects include Hope St. sidewalks, West Street water & sewer design, and GCET Leyden Woods expansion); and under social services, the food pantry and Lifepath meals programs are under way (Lifepath shifted from congregate meals to grab & go due to COVID), and seniors programming was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

Funding FY20 is pending release in January (funding release delayed due to COVID).

Revising program activities funded with CDBG18

The City is seeking public comment on support for funding homeless services, specifically funding toward homeless shelter.

NH: In support of Housing First concept, which emphasizes need for housing first in order to address other issues which affect homelessness, and in support generally of whatever funding the City will put toward homelessness. What is City thinking of?

LR: This is first step to think of ways to use funding, about 10k available in FY18. Possibly use to fill in funding gaps for warming/day shelter to get through winter. Pre-COVID, public spaces could be used for this purpose, but COVID has changed this landscape. This hearing is beginning of process, not yet a commitment of funds, just beginning the exploratory process.

No further public comment.

Adjourn at 12:31 p.m.



Minutes of CDBG PUBLIC HEARING
December 2, 2020 at 6:00 p.m.
Remote, Via WebEx

Call to Order at 6:08 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
Judith Roberts, The Literacy Project
Pam Kelly, resident of Greenfield
Wisty Rorabacher, 28 Prospect Ave, Greenfield

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

1. Social Service and infrastructure priorities for the City's 2021 Mini-Entitlement Program application, including West Street reconstruction;
2. Ongoing grant implementation of activities funded through the 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 awards;
3. Revising program activities funded with CDBG18 to support services to homeless individuals designed to respond to needs caused by the COVID pandemic.

Social Service and infrastructure priorities for CDBG21 Application

Rowe shared the current draft of the 2021 Community Development Strategy, as available on the CEDD department website. Reviewed traditional priorities/others by rank. End of table shows recently completed projects. Community Development Strategy provides framework to discuss needs in community, and explain funding priorities with state.

Roberts stated she was impressed by the City's goals. Spoke in support of prioritizing economic sufficiency through adult education programs like The Literacy Project. This program provides a vital service to the students and is about economic sufficiency. Especially in the time of COVID, their students need both the academic and skills training and social connection more than ever.

Ongoing grant implementation

Rowe reviewed the grants in implementation phase.

The CDBG17 grant is almost closed, all activities have completed (projects included 6 units of Housing Rehab, improved accessibility at Garden Cinema, several Streets & Sidewalks projects, architectural barrier removal at Lunt field, pocket park at garage; and social services for the food pantry, summer youth employment, and nutrition and wellness for elders).

The CDBG18 is currently open. Completed Housing Rehab (goal of 3 units, completed 4); code compliance program for landlords is ongoing (recently hired staff person to assist); commercial improvement for the First National Bank (FNB) stabilization, was repurposed into microenterprise assistance (\$5k for eligible businesses, have awarded \$30k out of \$40k available so far); GCET expansion; 188 Main demolition; and social services funding for food pantry and nutrition/wellness for elder.

For CDBG19, Housing Rehab goal is 3 units, so far we've completed one emergency roof, one rehab/lead abatement project is under construction, and we're looking to pair remaining funds with Gateway Housing Funds for a multi-family property. Funding for the FNB was reallocated to microenterprise support (\$5k for eligible businesses, \$50k), infrastructure projects include Hope St. sidewalks, West Street infrastructure replacement design, and GCET Leyden Woods expansion; and under social services, the food pantry and Lifepath meals programs are under way (Lifepath shifted from congregate meals to grab & go due to COVID), and seniors programming was cancelled due to COVID restrictions.

Funding CDBG20 is pending release in January (funding release delayed due to COVID). It covers West Street, phase 1 infrastructure replacement; a downtown study; and four social services: food pantry, COA, LifePath meals, and The Literacy Project.

Revising program activities funded with CDBG18

The City is seeking public comment on support for funding homeless services, specifically funding toward homeless shelter. Adams reviewed the current state of homelessness services in the City. Specifically that the shelter is undergoing construction for expansion and there is need for places for people to go during the daytime hours during construction. The City may have some funds through FEMA, but these funds cover through December 31. After that, funding becomes uncertain. This would allow the city to use funds for a new activity and provide a daytime warming location. This evening's meeting is to take comment on using some of the 2018 funding for this.

A conversation about the status of current sheltering followed.

Kelly asked how many beds are at Wells St?

Adams responded that currently there are about 21 beds, but they have a waiting list. After the renovation there will be about 35 beds. The City is working as part of a regional effort now, and is hoping there will be less demand for sheltering. Last year's warming shelter can't run this

year. The most immediate need is daytime warming locations now that cafes and public buildings are closed.

Kelly asked how many beds are at the Salvation Army?

Adams responded that the Salvation Army does not have any beds. They can offer funding for a few hotel rooms. They used to be able to offer a warming shelter but can't now. The Wells Street shelter, even when fully opened, can only accommodate guests at the shelter. There are people who still need daytime warming locations who are not sheltered at Wells Street.

Kelly stated that she represented the Social Justice Committee at All Souls. Please let us know if you need a place.

Adams thanked her for offering. We'll be in touch.

Hearing no further public comment, Rowe closed the hearing at 6:42 p.m.

