

**City of Lawrence, KS  
Community Development Advisory Committee  
February 25, 2010 Minutes (City Commission Room)**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Susan Adams, Marci Francisco, Chris Marshall, Quinn Miller, Julie Mitchell, Vern Norwood, Brenda Nunez, Aimee Polson, Patti Welty

**MEMBERS ABSENT:** Kathy Pryor (Submitted Resignation from Committee prior to meeting), Roberta Suenram (Submitted Resignation from Committee prior to meeting)

**STAFF PRESENT:** Danelle Dresslar, Margene Swarts

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Nico Roesler

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Chair Norwood called the meeting to order at 5:30 pm.

**1. Introductions**

Members and staff introduced themselves.

**2. Approval of the February 11, 2010 Minutes.**

There were several typographical corrections noted regarding the February 11, 2010 minutes. Staff will correct the minutes accordingly.

Polson moved **to approve the CDAC meeting minutes from the January 28, 2010 meeting with corrections.** The motion was seconded by Welty and **passed 8-0.**

Swarts mentioned to the Committee that Pryor and Suenram both tendered their resignations prior to the meeting.

**3. Review "Step Up to Better Housing" Strategy.**

Norwood said she requested this agenda item as there are several new members to the Committee and she wanted to make sure that they had a good understanding of the strategy that the City Commission approved and that the CDAC had been using for the past several years. This strategy is what the Committee bases their allocation decisions on.

Adams asked about the history of the strategy.

Swarts said that the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy was the result of discussions between the Housing Advisory Council, the CDBG Advisory Committee, the Practitioner's Panel, and the Community Development Block Grant Review Board in 1996. These groups met with City staff to develop goals and priorities for this funding. In these talks, four primary categories of needs emerged: emergency housing, transitional housing, permanent housing, and revitalized neighborhoods. This strategy has been reviewed each year by the City Commission and they have continued to support the basis for the allocation decisions.

Norwood added that when the Committee is in deliberations about funding allocations, the question should be asked upon review if the application meets the strategy's goals. If so, it is an application that can be considered in funding decisions.

Adams asked if the strategy had been updated since 1997.

Norwood said it had not been updated but it is reviewed each year and the CDAC has continued to recommend to the City Commission that the document be used as a basis for funding decisions. Norwood noted that as the CDAC had already determined that they were using the strategy for the basis for decisions with this round of applications; she wanted to review the document at the meeting this evening as the basis for allocations and if there are changes that the CDAC would like to implement in the strategy they can discuss that in the fall and suggest changes at that time. Norwood said personally her thought about the strategy is that there is no documentation that it has been reviewed every year since then. Norwood said that if she was a citizen and she looked at this document she might think that it had not been reviewed at all since 1997. Her hope is that in the fall the CDAC can update the document to 2010.

Adams asked if the committee was going to look at streamlining the strategy to better match the guidelines for CDBG and HOME funding on the HUD website. She said that the HUD website addressed many additional issues that are not included in the strategy. The guidelines that HUD are promoting are looking for job growth and economic development as necessities for communities.

Norwood said that there are people in the community that hear the CDAC speak about the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy and it is important that they understand how it fits in with this group and the goals of the community. Norwood said that when they review the strategy later on they can look at it and see if there should be new guidelines or other changes that they should consider.

Marshall entered the meeting at 5:50 pm.

Adams said that everyone should be thinking about how the economy has been and when this strategy was originally written. There may be more that this group can do for the community.

Swarts reminded the CDAC that the CDBG and HOME programs have a regulatory basis, but individual communities are given the opportunity to address specific community needs with funding and projects. She said the CDAC is in the position to allocate funding to the community in the best way they see fit. The flexibility for the community decisions is built into the programs. Lawrence has different needs than other communities. As long as the allocations and programs are following the regulations, then the community can choose how they want to spend the money. The "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy is one that has been working in the past for allocation decisions, and if the CDAC feels there should be some changes in the document then they can discuss that, and if they like it they do not have to change it. There is no federal prescription for spending the grants. Swarts reminded the Committee that they can place the strategy on an agenda item for the fall and the document can be revisited at that time.

The members of the CDAC read the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy out loud.

Polson asked if the brochure was in any particular order as far as the priorities listed.

Swarts said the brochure was not set up in any particular order of importance.

The CDAC decided to revisit the strategy at a meeting in May.

Swarts suggested that the CDAC might want to involve the Community Commission on Homelessness in the discussion because of the previously adopted Housing Vision. Swarts said at that time the CDAC can also review the application for updates.

#### **4. Continue Deliberations – CDBG Public Services.**

Swarts reminded the Committee that there is an overage of \$2,090.00 in the category of Capital Improvements that they will need to address.

Adams asked Francisco if she would like to change her allocation motion for the sidewalk and lighted pathway projects.

Francisco moved **to fund 13a, City of Lawrence Public Works Lighted Pathway Project in the amount of \$59,410; and 13b, City of Lawrence**

**Public Works Sidewalk Project in the amount of \$98,500.** Adams seconded the motion, **which passed 9-0.**

Francisco wanted to make the CDAC aware that the City Commission had voted to grant a one year extension on the SUP for Lawrence Community Shelter at the current 944 Kentucky location. Lawrence Community Shelter had asked for two years to begin fundraising, and based on approvals, complete their relocation project, but the comments of neighbors and the petition from the downtown merchants brought the approval down to one year. She said that the CDAC should be aware of this because the extension will be up by the time there are additional monies available for funding the shelter for next year. The CDAC might want to look into leaving some flexibility to the City Commission for addressing this situation.

Swarts added that the shelter still has CDBG-R funding allocated to them but the location needs to be determined. The funding was originally allocated for the project on Massachusetts Street for an overflow shelter, but that project was withdrawn. Staff is waiting to see if the new location will be approved and then will see if the City Commission wishes to allocate that particular piece of funding to the acquisition of the building. There is a three year window of opportunity to spend the CDBG-R funds. The Planning Commission will hear the SUP request from LCS on March 22, and if approved by the Planning Commission it will be heard by the City Commission in April.

Francisco said that if this proposal is approved then the funding will all dovetail together. They will only have a year to accomplish this project.

Swarts said that she attended the City Commission meeting when the SUP was discussed and the City Commission may revisit this 944 Kentucky SUP in the fall. They wanted to make sure that if the new location is approved, things are progressing. They could potentially revisit an extension at that time. Swarts said that it appeared it is the assumption that there needs to be a shelter in Lawrence. Therefore, it is not a case where you can close one shelter without having a new one ready to move into. The City Commission wants to make sure that LCS moves with haste to relocate and vacate the 944 Kentucky location, but they also acknowledge that one year might not be enough time to accomplish that.

Francisco said that if the Committee wanted to allocate additional CDBG Capital Improvement funds to the shelter that this is the grant year that it would have to be done. The 2011 grant year will not have funding available until August of 2011. That will be a year and four months from now, meaning the SUP may have already run out and they may be in their new location. Francisco said that if they wanted to augment the CDBG-R funds they had the ability to do that.

This body has said that emergency housing is an important part of their decision making process.

Norwood told the group that there was \$121,173 available to allocate to Public Services, and the request amount according to the applications is \$241,544.

Adams asked if anything had been received from Pinckney since the first quarter of the last grant year.

Swarts said that there has not.

Norwood said that as she looked at the neighborhood reports she noted that Oread had not submitted their second quarter reports for the 2009 grant year, and the report was due on February 10.

Francisco said that she meant to speak to the coordinator about this prior to the meeting, but she will approach the subject with her this evening as they have a neighborhood meeting after the CDAC meeting.

Norwood said that the newsletters showed that Oread was doing things, but the neighborhood has a responsibility with the funding that they receive to submit these performance reports. Norwood said that she is not suggesting that they not be funded because of this, but she wants to point out that some of the neighborhoods are not giving the Committee what is required of them based on the funding allocation.

Welty moved **to fully fund 8a, Housing and Credit Counseling, Inc. for the Tenant-Landlord Counseling and Education Programs in the amount of \$25,000.** Mitchell seconded the motion, **which passed 9-0.**

Welty moved **to fully fund 7a, Douglas County AIDS Project for the Emergency Assistance Program in the amount of \$4,000.** Adams seconded the motion, **which passed 9-0.**

Mitchell moved **to fully fund 1a, Brook Creek Neighborhood Association for Operating and Coordinator Costs in the amount of \$6,570.** Polson seconded the motion.

Welty suggested instead of funding each neighborhood individually the Committee should consider how they are going to move forward in funding the neighborhoods.

Miller agreed with Welty and said that the funding is going to be short no matter how you look at it, and there is a potential for some cuts in the requests.

Adams said that when you look at the bottom line, there are agencies like the Ballard Community Center who came in and spoke to the CDAC about their request and what they do. In the specific case of Ballard the request is much larger this year than last year.

Norwood said that situations can drastically change from year to year. The need might be overwhelming this year, but it may not be as large next year.

Adams said that it stuck with her that Ballard said they cannot fund 90% of their requests. If that is correct, then perhaps the CDAC should look at the big things first in terms of funding.

Francisco said that she thought that it was a good idea to look at the neighborhoods as a group, then at Ballard, The Salvation Army, and Lawrence Community Shelter as a group. She said that Ballard is giving out \$200 for rent and utility assistance, and social service funding has been cut so The Salvation Army and Lawrence Community Shelter are seeing the effects of that.

Norwood called for a vote as there was a motion on the table.

**The motion failed 2-7.**

Norwood asked if the CDAC would like to look at the neighborhoods as a grouping.

Polson said that the neighborhoods are not all equal.

Adams agreed and said that looking at the performance reports that have been submitted, some neighborhoods are doing a lot more than other neighborhoods. She said that she felt like Brook Creek was one that was working hard to deal with issues that come their way, and Oread is also bombarded with problems and then constantly needs to consider the students that live there, KU itself, and the developers. She agreed that the neighborhoods are not equal.

Francisco said that the neighborhoods have provided budgets with the components of their request. She suggested looking at the budgets and seeing what aspects could be removed and what could remain.

Polson said that she had questions about East Lawrence's budget, and in all reality the budgets are done differently by each neighborhood so it is hard to compare them on a level playing field. She suggested offering a template to the neighborhoods with the 2011 application that gives them a guide for their budget page and helps the Committee look at them equally.

Francisco said that looking at Brook Creek, the important line items that she sees are the newsletter, coordinator salary, and general office expenses. She suggested taking out the LAN dues and the newspaper subscription.

Mitchell moved **to fund 1a, Brook Creek Neighborhood Association for Operating and Coordinator Costs in the amount of \$6,450.** Polson seconded the motion, **which passed 9-0.**

Polson said looking at East Lawrence the newsletter printing was \$2,600 and the postage was \$1,600. There were \$850 in office supplies and copying costs. Polson suggested removing the tiller maintenance and the LAN dues and making the office supplies and copying costs a \$200 item. Her suggestion was \$4,440 total for operating.

Norwood said that left \$5,870.80 for the coordinator salary. She asked if it could be fixed at \$10/hour.

Francisco asked if the Committee wanted to look at the other coordinator salaries and come up with a number for funding purposes.

Swarts said that the CDAC could either decide they wanted coordinators to have a set amount for salaries or they can establish a wage, and everything over what is allocated would be the responsibility of the neighborhood to pick up, if they choose to fund the coordinator at a higher amount.

Norwood suggested leaving the wage at \$10 per hour.

Francisco said that if the CDAC does that then some of the coordinators will be taking a pay cut.

Miller suggested giving them a coordinator allocation and not mandating their salaries.

Polson asked if East Lawrence Neighborhood Association was given \$10,000 including \$4,000 for operating and \$6,000 for the coordinator expenses can they move the funding around within their organization.

Swarts said that originally it was set that no neighborhood could pay their coordinator more than 55% of their allocated funding. This kept neighborhoods from changing their applications after they were submitted.

Polson asked if the CDAC needed to adjust the applications to be within the 55% limit.

Swarts said that if the CDAC allocated a lump sum to the neighborhoods then they will look at what is being reimbursed. The direction was that 55% of the grant was the limit that the coordinator could make from the grant funding. What the CDAC does depends on their philosophy about the coordinators.

Francisco suggested \$5,800 for the salary on the East Lawrence application.

Polson moved **to fund 2a, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association for Operating and Coordinator costs in the amount of \$10,240, which includes \$5,800 for the Coordinator Salary and \$4,440 for operating costs.** Francisco seconded the motion, **which passed 9-0.**

Norwood said that North Lawrence Improvement Association is requesting \$8,100 for Operating and Coordinator expenses.

Swarts said that the breakdown of the neighborhood's request was \$2,800 for coordinator expenses, \$3,500 for operating expenses, and \$1,800 for the clean-up project.

Francisco said that the LAN dues could be cut from the operating expenses.

Polson noted that operating was less this year than last.

Mitchell said that East Heights lets Brook Creek meet for free in their building. She suggested that North Lawrence speak to Woodlawn Elementary about a free meeting space as they are spending \$240 on meeting spaces for their meetings.

Adams said that she lives in Old West Lawrence, and suggested that the neighborhoods look at alternatives to postage charges such as they do in Old West Lawrence. The neighborhood has block representatives that hand deliver the newsletter to homes so there is no postage costs.

Mitchell said that Old West Lawrence can do that because they are a much smaller neighborhood than some of the ones that are funded with CDBG money. Some of the CDBG neighborhoods could not do that because of the size and geography.

Francisco moved **to fund 3a, North Lawrence Improvement Association for Operating and Coordinator costs in the amount of \$7,835, which includes no funding for the meeting space rental and LAN dues.** Miller seconded the motion.

Welty said that she did not know where else the neighborhood association could meet. She said that she works at an elementary school and that the entire district is looking to save as much money as possible so they are not approving

many requests such as this. This is not a good time in the economy of the school district situation to ask for free meeting space from a grade school.

Polson suggested that the neighborhood could reduce their allocation for the clean-up by \$240 and keep the meeting space if they needed to.

**The motion passed 8-1.**

#### **5. Miscellaneous/Calendar.**

There was nothing additional to report in terms of the calendar or any miscellaneous items.

#### **6. Public Comment.**

Nico Roesler, KU Journalism student, asked when the grants will be funded.

Swarts answered August of 2010.

#### **7. Adjourn.**

Polson moved **to adjourn the February 25, 2010 meeting of the CDAC at 7:00 pm.** The motion was seconded by Mitchell and **passed 9-0.**

## Attendance Record

Members	Jan 14	Jan 28	Feb 11	Feb 25	Mar 11	Mar 25	Apr 8	Apr 22	May 13	May 27	Jun 10	Jun 24	July 8	July 22	Aug 12	Aug 26	Sept 9	Sept 23	Oct 14	Oct 28	Nov 11	Nov 25	Dec 9	Dec 23
Susan Adams	+	+	+	+																				
Marci Francisco	+		+	+																				
Chris Marshall	+	+	E	+																				
Quinn Miller	+			+																				
Julie Mitchell	+	E	+	+																				
Vern Norwood	+	+	+	+																				
Brenda Nunez	+	+	+	+																				
Aimee Polson	E	+	+	+																				
Katherine Pryor	+	+		*																				
Roberta Suenram	+	+		*																				
Patti Welty	+	+	+	+																				

\* Resigned prior to meeting.