

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

MEMBERS PRESENT: Susan Adams, Marci Francisco, Chris Marshall, Julie Mitchell, Vern Norwood, Aimee Polson, Patti Welty

MEMBERS ABSENT: Quinn Miller, Brenda Nunez

STAFF PRESENT: Danelle Dresslar, Margene Swarts

PUBLIC PRESENT:

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

1. Introductions

Members and staff introduced themselves.

2. Approval of the March 11, 2010 Minutes.

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

Polson moved **to approve the CDAC meeting minutes from the March 11, 2010 meeting with corrections.** The motion was seconded by Welty and **passed 6-0.**

3. Finalize CDBG/HOME allocation recommendations.

Welty said she did some calculations and that based on the discussion from the February 25 minutes and what was subtracted from the NLIA request, the amount does not match what they were ultimately allocated. Welty said that the CDAC moved to subtract \$240 for the meeting space rent, \$25 for LAN dues, and \$1800 from the clean-up project. The Table of Contents indicates that the allocated funding for NLIA is \$5,585. By her calculations, it should have been \$6,035.

Welty moved **to fund 3a, North Lawrence Improvement Association Operating and Coordinator Expenses in the amount of \$6,035.**

Francisco seconded the motion.

Adams said that in reading through the neighborhood reports, NLIA is dealing with many issues. There is a lot of activity in the neighborhood.

Polson asked where the additional funding for NLIA would be taken from. There was no response.

Norwood called for the vote on the motion.

The motion passed unanimously.

Norwood asked where the additional \$450 should come from.

Welty said that she saw an article about the Boys and Girls Club and their desire to acquire East Heights School from the school district.

Swarts said she did not think the Boys and Girls Club was vacating their current structure and that there would just be programs moving into the other building if they can come to an agreement with the School District.

Adams said that the way she read the article in the newspaper they were vacating their current building.

Norwood said that even if they are vacating the Boys and Girls Club funding is a capital improvement, so it would do no good to offset the \$450 from NLIA with that allocation.

Swarts agreed with Norwood, but cautioned the CDAC about allocating or revising an allocation amount based on a media report.

Norwood said that the CDAC allocated the Boys and Girls Club funding based on the application that they submitted. Unless the Committee hears differently, it should be assumed that that application still stands.

Adams said that the Boys and Girls Club situation should be discussed. The CDAC discussed the shelter funding as a funding possibility without knowing a result.

Norwood asked Swarts that if the Boys and Girls Club do ultimately move their agency into the East Heights building and they do not use the allocated funds would the funds come back to the City for reallocation?

Swarts said that if the Boys and Girls Club is moving then the funding will not be spent on their current facility.

Mitchell moved **to fund 9a, Lawrence Community Shelter Operations in the amount of \$33,098.** Polson seconded the motion.

Mitchell said that LCS seemed like the most flexible allocation to take the \$450 from. With the other agencies, there was a calculation to determine the allocation, such as The Salvation Army and their feeding program.

Francisco suggested that since there was nine allocations, the CDAC can look at taking \$50 out of each agency and neighborhoods' allocated funding to offset the \$450.

Mitchell said that she was concerned about the neighborhood taking a hit of \$50 from their budgets. The neighborhoods run on a very tight budget as it is, and to take \$50 out will be a large hit. It will be a bigger hit for the neighborhoods to take than one of the larger agencies.

Francisco said that her concern was that LCS had taken a lot of funding hits recently, and they are currently looking for a lot of money for their relocation.

Marshall entered the meeting at 5:45pm.

Norwood called for the vote.

The motion failed 3-4.

Francisco moved **to fund 1a, Brook Creek Neighborhood Association Operating and Coordinator Expenses in the amount of \$6,425; 2a, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association Operating and Coordinator Expenses in the amount of \$10,190; 3a, North Lawrence Improvement Association Operating and Coordinator Expenses in the amount of \$6010; 4a, Oread Neighborhood Association Operating and Coordinator Expenses in the amount of \$9,429; 6a, Ballard Community Center Emergency Services Council in the amount of \$14,950; 7a Douglas County AIDS Project Emergency Assistance Program in the amount of \$3,975, 8a, Housing and Credit Counseling Tenant-Landlord Counseling and Education Programs in the amount of \$24,900; 9a, Lawrence Community Shelter Operations in the amount of \$33,448; and 10a, The Salvation Army Feeding Program in the amount of \$11,846.** Mitchell seconded the motion.

Adams said that she has met with Robert Baker at HCCI and is concerned about how direct their services are in comparison with some of the other agencies that are asking for funding.

Francisco said that the direct service that HCCI provides is that they help to keep people in their homes. They do this through credit counseling. This is a non-profit credit counseling group. They work with those citizens facing foreclosure or bankruptcy.

Adams said that when she met with Baker, he had indicated to her that the level of service is declining and he is having a difficult time getting in contact with those that need their service. Baker said that they are not seeing as many people as they have in the past. He is wondering how he can identify with those that need their services.

Francisco said that they receive referrals from banks.

Adams said that Baker indicated to her that they do not receive banking referrals.

Norwood said that if a person is looking at declaring bankruptcy they are required to have credit counseling and that requirement is coming from attorneys.

Adams said Baker told her that he cannot get this information from the banks.

Francisco said that although he might not get the referrals directly from the bank itself, the referral does come from the people involved. When the CDAC has met with the City Commission in the past regarding CDBG allocations, the City Commission has looked at the CDAC to fund this agency. If the CDAC could not fund HCCI then the City Commission would be responsible for finding the funding.

Adams asked who HCCI directly serves.

Francisco said that the direct benefit is serving those who have received a notice for eviction. This can be in a rental or a home-ownership scenario.

Adams said her concern is the quantity of those being served by HCCI. If the people that Baker is trying to serve are not being served at the same level that they have in the past then where is the money going? In the application, HCCI identified that the number served has been down. People are not able to get into the bad loans they could in the past because credit has tightened up.

Francisco said that HCCI keeps records on every contact they make.

Adams said that those numbers are down. She questioned taking the same amount away from HCCI and LCS.

Francisco said that the question is how many are experiencing homelessness and how many are experiencing foreclosure and eviction. She said that the CDAC has historically funded HCCI because this helps those who are renting. The CDAC sets aside a significant amount for homeownership, and HCCI is able to

reach a large amount of renters. There are more people being helped here for a smaller dollar amount.

Swarts noted that HCCI is the only agency in Lawrence that works primarily with landlord/tenant issues and credit counseling.

Norwood called for the vote.

The motion passed 6-1.

4. Receive 2010 Annual Action Plan draft, Discuss upcoming public hearing (April 8, 2010).

Norwood asked the CDAC if there were any comments regarding the Annual Action Plan Draft for the 2010 Program Year.

Adams said that she thought that the group would be revisiting the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy and was concerned as to why it was included in the Action Plan Draft.

Swarts said that the Action Plan reflects what will be happening with the CDBG and the HOME funding of the overall community plan. It is a piece of the Consolidated Planning process. The Annual Action Plan talks about how the pieces fit together. This draft looks much like what the City of Lawrence and the CDAC have been doing for the past several years. If that is what the CDAC wishes to recommend, then this document reflects that plan. Next year, if the Committee wants to do something different, then the contents and the narrative will reflect those choices. If the CDAC decides to change the allocation strategy then the Annual Action Plan will change with it. This document mirrors the decision process.

Adams said that on Page Four she is concerned about the different statistics that are being used across the board. The City is using one set of statistics, and the community agencies are using several others. The community is using whatever set of stats they can gather their information from and the City needs to be careful of this and make sure there is a full representation of these statistics available. Adams referenced the discussions regarding the usage of the student information in looking at the Oread neighborhood and how the census considers them and how the CDBG program looks at them. On actual housing statistics in that neighborhood, the list prices and sales prices of homes are not consistent with meeting the needs that the CDAC is trying to meet.

Swarts said that there has been a lot of discussion regarding university students and income levels that determine low and moderate-income areas. The information that the City of Lawrence receives on these neighborhoods are from

HUD and they are based on demographic information by census tract and block group. There is no stipulation that a neighborhood has to be discounted because it is located adjacent to a university.

Adams said that having students in your community requires public services. Statistics such as the real estate values and sales prices should be considered when looking at the needs of Lawrence. She said as she was reading the grant applications, she had questions regarding the direct service benefits and funding sources listed for these agencies.

Norwood acknowledged that it would be easier if everyone used the same source. If applicants and the City staff all used the same information, it might be easier to compare. However, percentages and stats can be viewed in different ways. Some agencies may count something in their application and another agency might not. Norwood said that she sees the same thing in some of the programs she works with in that AARP considers a person to be eligible for benefits after the age of 55, and other programs may be 60 and yet others may be 65 years of age. It depends on the agency.

Adams agreed and said that it is a note of caution.

Norwood said that the information that City staff uses is from HUD and she has no problem trusting those statistics.

Adams agreed and said that it is just a case that the CDAC is making funding decisions based on different information sources.

Francisco said that she was interested in what the CDAC might do in terms of employment options. The Planning Commission took positive action with regard to the Lawrence Community Shelter and they are planning on having employment opportunities and job training onsite. The CDAC might want to see if there is any way that funding can be set aside next year for capital improvement projects for the new shelter site. They are still at least a year out as far as moving to the new location pending the proper approvals. If the CDAC wants to look at the employment factors in the community then this might be a place that they can allocate funding for important employment activities.

Adams asked if they have anything other than the dog biscuit program.

Francisco said that LCS is looking at other things to implement as far as the employment programs go.

Swarts said that the building that LCS is looking at is a building shell and there will be a lot of rehabilitation needed.

Francisco said that it is not too early to let LCS know that they can be thinking about a request for next year based on the upcoming decisions. She said that she is also interested in looking at the Jail's re-entry program and ID problems with those being released. Without an ID it is hard to do anything. At one point the Sheriff's office was looking at providing funding to help those being released to obtain a State ID card, but those programs are running into funding problems. It is hard enough to get those coming through re-entry employment, but as the job market is much more competitive right now it is even harder.

Francisco said that those are the two areas of the Action Plan she would like to see supported by the CDAC allocation process. The CDAC could do outreach to these agencies as well as others, and let them know that the CDAC recognizes what they do for the community, their charge fits in with the Committee's goals, and ask them if they would be interested in putting in an application for the CDBG funding. If the CDAC does not seek out those who have not historically been considered for funding through the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy, they might not see any new applications come through. Other community groups and agencies will think that the CDAC is still focused on housing.

Adams said that she did not look into the Re-entry program in the Action Plan. She asked if they had an office location.

Francisco said that the program is staffed through the Douglas County Jail. She suggested asking someone from the program to come talk to the CDAC sometime prior to the next round of applications. They can share with the Committee what is happening, what they are seeing, and how they are looking at the housing component for those being released.

Adams asked if those that are released and homeless end up at the shelter.

Francisco said some do end up staying at the shelter. The Re-entry program is one that makes the neighborhoods safer, provides a service to the released population, and also brings down instances of crime and repeat offenders.

Marshall asked what percentage of the inmates released into the community are homeless.

Francisco said she was unsure of the numbers.

Norwood asked when the CDAC would like to invite the Re-entry program to attend a meeting.

Francisco said later on this year, and she also suggested inviting the shelter staff to speak about their job program. Francisco said that she is not interested in

changing the allocation the group has determined for the 2010 year, just that she wants to get a head start on next year's batch of applications.

Polson said that she would like to discuss at that time a standard budget page for the neighborhoods so the comparisons can be easier to talk about.

Francisco agreed that it was not unreasonable to ask the neighborhoods to provide a standardized budget form.

Adams asked when the agencies will find out that they have received this allocated funding. She cited the Boys and Girls Club as an example and if they are moving how would that reallocation work.

Swarts said that if changes are not made by the public hearing then it would require a Substantial Amendment to change the allocation. Funds can be reallocated or carried over to the next program year.

Norwood suggested to the Committee that if that is the case and the agency was moving that it would be better to carry it over until the next year.

Adams said that there are other projects that could use the funding, such as the sidewalk project. As the Public Works staff said, they are getting a good deal because of the economy and it would be a shame to let the money sit there when they could be using it.

Francisco added that if the Boys and Girls Club does move then the funding may be able to be utilized for rehabilitation at the East Heights site. It is possible that the funding can just stay with the organization.

5. Miscellaneous/Calendar.

Swarts reminded the CDAC that their public hearing was the next meeting, April 8, 2010. The meeting will start at 5:45, and the public hearing will start at 6:00 pm. After the public hearing, the meeting will reconvene.

Swarts said that staff was looking into times that the CCH and the CDAC could meet for a planning retreat to look at the "Step Up to Better Housing" strategy and the community goals. Staff is looking at a daytime retreat over the lunch hour in late May or early June. The meeting will start in the late morning and go into early afternoon and lunch will be provided.

The Committee agreed that a daytime retreat would work for them.

Swarts said that staff will look at some dates and send out the information to both committees.

6. Public Comment.

Deron Belt, East Lawrence Neighborhood Association President, asked about the amounts requested for the larger agencies and the funding of these agencies at a lower allocated amount.

Norwood said that the CDAC had to carefully weigh all the application and cuts had to be made in the amounts that were requested from the majority of the public service agencies. She explained that there was a much higher amount requested than what was available for allocation, and the Committee had discussions about each application and how it could be funded.

Belt asked if the Lighted Pathway project was the project in the Oread.

Francisco said that the request was the plan from the students and Public Works for the Oread neighborhood.

Swarts added that the funding that has been allocated to that application is for lighting in or adjacent to South Park and not the "Lighted Pathway" project.

7. Adjourn.

Polson moved **to adjourn the March 25, 2010 meeting of the CDAC at 6:40 pm**. The motion was seconded by Welty and **passed 7-0**.

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	+	+	+	+	E	+																		
Marci Francisco	+		+	+	E	+																		
Chris Marshall	+	+	E	+	+	+																		
Quinn Miller	+			+	+	E																		
Julie Mitchell	+	E	+	+	+	+																		
Vern Norwood	+	+	+	+	+	+																		
Brenda Nunez	+	+	+	+	+																			
Aimee Polson	E	+	+	+	+	+																		
Katherine Pryor	+	+		*																				
Roberta Suenram	+	+		*																				
Patti Welty	+	+	+	+	+	+																		

* Resigned prior to meeting.