

APPROVED ON 9-28-07

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC HEARING**

**APRIL 19, 2007**

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL**

**6:00 P.M.**

Present: Chairperson Nancy Emerson, Vice Chairperson Dani Rooney, Stephen Lichtenstein, Bob Layton, William Thorpe, Lynne Langley, Algene Bailey

Absent: Jean Pecunies (called)

Staff: Cindy Hayden, Deputy City Manager; David Moore, CD Program Manager

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Chairperson Emerson opened the public hearing at 7:00 p.m. and noted that the hearing's purpose was to solicit input on the Draft FY 2007-2008 CDBG Annual Plan and Budget.

Chairperson Emerson then recognized Chris Sterndale, Executive Director of Cross Roads House. Mr. Sterndale spoke on behalf of the agency's request for \$100,000 in CDBG grant funds for the construction of the Cross Roads House Redevelopment Project. Mr. Sterndale began his comments by noting the various additions and alterations to the shelter in the 21 years it has been located at 600 Lafayette Road. He noted the disrepair and inefficiency of the mechanical systems, the limitations of the current layout and their impact on the program of services at the shelter. He said the agency would experience a decrease in the operational costs because the new building would address these challenges. Mr. Sterndale indicated that the goal of the redevelopment project was to create a more pleasant, constructive and dignified place to stay for families and individuals experiencing homelessness. He said the improvements would allow shelter guests to concentrate on addressing the factors leading to homelessness, resulting in shorter stays and faster transition to permanent housing. Shorter stays and faster transitions to permanent housing will also allow the facility to operate with a decrease in the number of beds at the shelter. Mr. Sterndale indicated that the shelter had been proceeding with private fundraising and it was seeking governmental support through local and state CDBG programs. Chairperson Emerson thanked Mr. Sterndale for his comments.

After Mr. Sterndale's comments, Ms. Hayden reminded the committee that State CDBG prefers to see participation by the local CDBG program in public facilities projects. She said Portsmouth CDBG involvement at this stage will assist Cross Roads House in receiving State funding.

Seeing no other member of the public wishing to be recognized, Chairperson Emerson recognized Ms. Hayden to review the FY 2007-2008 draft budget with the committee. Ms. Hayden summarized all of the programs and projects in the draft budget. The budget included funding for ongoing CDBG programs including the Housing Rehabilitation Program, Residential Accessibility Program, Affordable Housing Challenge Grant Program, the Public Service Agency Grant Program, and the Portsmouth Non-Profit Loan Program. The draft budget also included funding for two public facilities projects, including the Cross Roads House Redevelopment Project (\$100,000) and funding for construction of a portion of the Raleigh Way Streetscape Improvement project (\$263,000). Ms. Hayden reminded the committee that because cost estimates for Raleigh Way are almost \$1.5 million the improvements would likely need to proceed in phases. Ms. Hayden also discussed staff efforts to research alternative funding mechanisms to allow for the construction of

Raleigh Way streetscape improvements to proceed earlier. In particular, she noted the potential use of Section 108 loan funds, which are guaranteed loan funds made available by U.S. Housing and Urban Development for communities to finance expensive public facilities and economic development projects. She said staff will continue to investigate the feasibility of accessing this funding source and would report back.

The draft budget also included funds for general administration and contingency. Ms. Hayden said the contingency line item may actually be higher with fiscal year balances likely to be remaining for some line items.

The committee discussed the proposed budget. Ms. Langley asked if the City would run into difficulties with HUD rules if large amounts of funds for the Raleigh Way Streetscape Project were not expended in a timely manner. Ms. Hayden indicated this is a possible issue this year given the two large public facilities projects in the budget. She explained that a significant amount of funding is allocated for Cross Roads House and Raleigh Way, which may or may not be expended in FY 2007-2008. She said, this is one reason staff is investigating participation in the Section 108 loan program. She said Community Development will watch this closely to ensure compliance with HUD guidelines and noted that Portsmouth CDBG has always met HUD timeliness requirements with regard to spending.

Mr. Thorpe asked if there was an appeals process for agencies participating in the Public Service Agency Grant Program who might be disappointed with their FY 2007-2008 grant awards. Ms. Hayden said that there is no formal process for appeals. She said when agencies have concerns they speak with staff members and staff typically share those concerns with the CAC.

Mr. Moore was then recognized to discuss the Annual Action Plan submission to HUD. He noted that the public comment period for the FY 2007-2008 Annual Plan and Budget will run through May 8, 2007. He said that if any comments are heard from the public from this date on he will make sure the committee receives those comments before submitting the draft plan.

Chairperson Emerson then sought a motion on the draft budget. Mr. Layton moved to recommend the FY 2007-2008 Annual Plan and Budget to the City Manager and Mr. Lichtenstein seconded the motion. All voted in favor.

Chairperson Emerson then sought a motion on the minutes from the meetings of March 6<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, and 22<sup>nd</sup>. Mr. Thorpe moved to accept the minutes as presented and the motion was seconded by Mr. Thorpe. All voted in favor.

Chairperson Emerson then entertained a motion to adjourn. Mr. Lichtenstein moved to adjourn and the motion was seconded by Mr. Bailey. All voted in favor. Chairperson Emerson adjourned the meeting at 7:05 p.m.