

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MEETING**

MAY 8, 2014

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL
Conference Room A**

6:30 P.M.

Present: Chairwoman Nancy Emerson, Vice Chairwoman Dani Rooney, Alison Hamilton, Constance Carmody, Judy Bunnell

Absent: Lynne Langley, (excused) Alicia Weaver (excused)

Staff: David Moore, Adam Cannon

Public Comment: Martha Stone, Stephanie Stevens, Del Morse

Chairwoman Emerson called the meeting to order and opened the public hearing at 6:30 p.m.

Community Development Director David Moore gave an overview of the CDBG Annual Plan and Budget development public hearing process and thanked attendees for their attendance. He also discussed the Citizens Advisory Committee recognition event and how its important to honor volunteerism.

Following these updates, Mr. Moore discussed the Draft FY14-15 Annual Plan and Budget and gave a similar overview of the budget as he did at the April 8th meeting. The budget included funding for the on-going programs funded through CDBG including the Housing Rehabilitation program and related administrative costs, the Residential Accessibility Grant Program, the Non-Profit Loan Program, Public Service Agency Grant Program, and General Administration.

Next, Mr. Moore discussed the various items in the FY15 draft Community Development budget and indicated that a Housing Rehab Committee meeting was held to discuss returning to the pre-2011 assistance structure (providing loans instead of grants) and to discuss next steps. Two factors led to the formation of a recommendation to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and City Manager regarding a return to the previous assistance structure. The first is that the program operated well as a loan program previously; namely that people assisted through the program were more focused on immediate code deficiency related improvements versus other non-emergency improvements under the loan program than the grant program. Second, offering the program as a loan program ensured that the funds expended on today's rehabilitation projects could be leant again (in the future) thereby insuring the resource is available for future households in need. He noted that the original loan structure that had worked will for many years for municipal cities changed in 2011 as a result of a state law preventing non-licensed work on loan origination. That law has been amended to allow a return to the previous loan structure.

He also noted the inclusion of funding for studies related to accessibility improvements at Woodbury Avenue and Gosling Road along with the inclusion of funding for "Citywide Accessibility Improvements". Another portion of funding has been allocated to accessibility improvements at City Hall including potential countertop improvements, bathroom modifications, entryway refurbishment and stair railing replacement. Funding for Maynard Park is also present as a carryover from last year's budget as the City is awaiting developments with the State DOT prior to making any adjustments. The Emergency Power Source for Public Service Agencies line item was also continued in the forthcoming year's budget.

Next, speakers came forth to begin the public comment portion of the meeting:

Del Morse, Chairwoman of the Atlantic Heights Neighborhood Association – Ms. Morse asked about Maynard Park and the timeline for its removal. She also asked about State of NH DOT plans for the park. Mr. Moore indicated that the focus of the DOT was to maintain the I-95 bridge and that the DOT has indicated their plans

to refurbish the bridge in 2018-2019. He also noted that the DOT was willing to work with the City on bridge and park-related needs.

Ms. Morse stated that water is flowing from Maynard Park into the street. Mr. Moore indicated that the City would look into her drainage concern and follow-up with her.

Stephanie Stevens, Center Manager for ServiceLink in Portsmouth– Stephanie Stevens attended the meeting to introduce herself and announce that she was taking over Becky May’s position as the new head of ServiceLink in Portsmouth. She gave an update about ServiceLink’s activities as a information directory for seniors and disabled people. She noted most of the people that contact ServiceLink are people who enter Medicare and Medicaid.

Martha Stone, Executive Director of the Cross Roads House – Ms. Stone attended the meeting to thank the Citizens Advisory Committee for supporting the Cross Roads House over the last decade.

Following this, Chairwoman Emerson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Cannon gave a brief update on the Raleigh Way drainage improvements. Ms. Emerson asked about progress on the emergency access project. Mr. Moore indicated that City staff has been following up on this issue in coordination with the private property owner adjacent to the neighborhood, PSNH. While work with PSNH on this issue continues, he cited progress on enhanced collaboration with PSNH for the operation of the existing “boat road” leading from Porpoise Way to Gosling Road. Specifically, he mentioned that the recently, a new interdepartmental memorandum was executed to establish protocols for the boat roads use in an emergency; public works had worked with PSNH to install evacuation signage along the boat road to make it more useable; and the City’s FY 15-20 CIP includes \$50,000 in general fund dollars in FY 2015 for improvements to the boat road to make it more usable (various shoulder improvements, repaving, and other improvements). He noted that the City staff would work with the neighborhood on their involvement and outreach activities to spread the word about the emergency access.

He noted that the best available solution is to perform maintenance on the existing boat road and to work in partnership with PSNH and City Police and Fire Departments to ensure access to the boat road for emergencies. This would include neighborhood involvement and outreach activities.

Mr. Moore discussed Ms. Morse’s request for a permanent, secondary road that moves through the industrial park and down Michael Succi Road. He noted that the City looked at this option during a study and that it was brought to the Parking, Traffic and Safety Committee. No action was taken at the Committee. He noted that residents are able to bring the issue to the Committee for reconsideration.

Ms. Rooney asked why it was Mr. Moore’s role to go back to the Committee for these requests if no CDBG funds are involved. Mr. Moore explained that the City Manager had asked him to follow this project. Ms. Hamilton asked if the boat road was locked or open to the public. Mr. Moore indicated that both PSNH and City Departments have access to the gates and will respond immediately in accordance with established emergency protocols.

Following this, the Committee unanimously voted to accept the April 8th minutes (Motion by Ms. Rooney, Second by Ms. Carmody).

The Committee then formalized their recommendation of the FY14-15 Annual Plan and Budget to the City Manager and to HUD for approval (Motion by Ms. Rooney, Second by Ms. Hamilton). This was approved unanimously.

Chairwoman Emerson adjourned the meeting at 7:20 p.m.