

**CDBG Priority Task Force
Meeting 3: Tuesday June 24, 2008
7:00- 9:00pm City Hall, Room 24**

Attendance: Wendy Harmon, Frank Gallagher, Rhonda Juneau, Denis Lachman, Anna Priluck, Larry Gross, Kyra Walker, Jeanemarie Celenatano.

City: Councilor Kevin Donoghue, Bill Needelman, Sr. Planner, T.J. Martzial, Director HNS, Amy Grommes Pulaski, HCD Program Manager.

1) Introduction, Welcome and Overview of Meeting

2) Comprehensive Plan Overview – Bill Needelman, Senior Planner

Bill explains that senior planners develop long range land use plans, but that can evolve into broader issues of City decision making. The City of Portland's Comprehensive plan includes many additional plans. The state of Maine has a growth management act which requires comprehensive plans for municipalities. Plans include waterfront, housing, transportation, and the Bayside vision, to name a few. The comprehensive plan has been adopted by the City Council.

He refers to the Community Vision statement that was developed in the Housing Plan, titled Sustaining Portland's Future. The question was raised by the committee who created the plan- what are we trying to achieve through housing? They realized there was no single vision for the city, so they created it. This has become the vision for the City's housing policy. City Council adopted it in the Housing Plan and added it to the beginning of the Comprehensive Land Use plan as well.

Comprehensive planning is not static, it's a process. He passes out the Sustainable Portland Summary Report. It's a final document but has not been adopted by the City Council. This committee looked at the city and said how do we become a sustainable place? They put together a broad document and this is the summary. We will see how this is implemented in the City Council. Although it has not been approved, it has been embraced. The Muskie School of Public Service has been working on an implementation plan with the Council Committee, Energy and Environmental Sustainability. The Sustainable Portland Report is an example of how comprehensive planning is moving forward.

Frank asks whether the Chamber of Commerce was involved. Bill replies that both Councilor Jim Cohen and Former Mayor Nathan Smith were involved, both of whom are chamber members.

Anna asked when the vision was written. Bill replies that the Housing Plan, and the community vision was adopted in 2002. Bill states that he is one of three senior planners, Alex Jaegerman and Barbara Barhydt, worked on this more directly.

Denis asks if previous CDBG PTF used the comprehensive plan in deciding priorities. Amy explains that a task force such as this one has not set priorities

before. Previously CMPAC worked with the Director of Health and Human Services to set the priorities, which have not been changed in many years.

Denis asks Bill if he has any recommendations on how to tap into the body of knowledge presented in the comprehensive plan so that the backdrop of what we are trying to do is supported by policy.

Bill responds that he chose these two documents: The Community Vision in the Housing Plan and the Sustainable Portland Report Summary because they are the most succinct. Sustainable Portland provides a framework for going through this type of exercise. However he states that he would like to go through the Vision.

Larry asks when the Vision reset is and the comprehensive plan reviewed and amended. Bill says the state would probably say that its time for a new one, however many of the additions and updates have evolved the comprehensive plan.

Bill begins to go through the vision statement for the City. It is split into distinctive features to build upon (ASSETS) and future directions (GOALS). Many of these items have been or can be funded by CDBG.

The city of Portland is 1) A City that provides for people. 2) a City that is a good place to live, and 3) a City that values its natural, architectural and cultural heritage. Future directions are to 1) build a vibrant small city, 2) serve the people, 3) provide high quality leadership, and 4) protect our community attributes.

The Sustainable Portland report builds out of the Community Vision. The Community Vision was adopted twice, as part of the Housing Plan and then when it readopted when the comprehensive plan was readopted.

Anna asks if the Sustainable Portland Report looked at updating the Community Vision. Bill replied, no. It has a specific purpose to look at the community as whole in a sustainable way. They wanted to understand the city as a sustainable city.

The Sustainable Portland Report is now being reviewed by a Council Subcommittee, the Energy and Environmental Sustainability Committee. Bill explains that the Sustainable Portland report provides a framework for understanding the comprehensive plan, and also informs us what is missing from the comprehensive plan.

Bill explains that when writing the summary of planning activities for the CDBG planning application, they framed it in the framework of sustainability: community, environment and economy. It was a good evaluative tool.

Kyra refers to a section of the Sustainable Portland Report under the sustainable community institutions. It states that the priority is to continue support for social service programming for “homelessness, adult education, at-risk youth, public health, and drug addiction.” She asks why were these used. Bill responds that these were representative and not prescriptive. Kevin recommends that the task force use their own lenses in reading the report. This report has not been approved. It can be submitted by Sustainability Committee. However to be adopted it must be reviewed by the Planning Board.

Larry mentions that the United Way representatives did participate on the Sustainable Task Force.

Denis asks Bill if he thinks that it would be wise for this committee to use the sustainability framework? Bill responds that this group is tasked to set priorities. It is important to know where you are in the framework. It is also important to know if these needs are being met in other programs.

Bill points to the back of the document and explains that the question here is a good one to ask yourself. Is this decision good for the environment, the economy, and the community?

Anna states that sustainability is based on the perspective. She reads a quote. She points out the differences in “sustainability” for different classes, poor vs rich.

Amy mentions that as we view the priorities we create we can use a number of lenses to look through. One may be sustainability, another may be based on economic status, another may be HUD’s rules and regulations.

3) Connect Comprehensive Plan to CDBG Priorities and Leadership Teams

Skipped.

4) Review Initial Priorities and Categories

Amy introduces the list of “gut” instinct priorities that were discussed at the last meeting. These include: Affordable and Sustainable Housing; A Walkable City, Quality of Place, Public Transportation, Fuel Assistance/ Energy Efficiency, Food Security, Crime Prevention, Jobs/ Economic Development. She opens the floor and asks the group if there are any items missing.

Kevin suggests adding Social Capital.

Larry asks if there is some demographic information that can help us define our priorities. Amy replies that she can get that information.

Jeannemarie states that social capital did play out in the past priorities. Like community policing getting money even though it wasn’t defined.

Anna states how our “gut” is different to how things have been done. It’s a conversation of how to relate the plan and our priorities. We have to consider the way we have done things. If we relate it back to the comprehensive plan, then it is further supported.

Denis states that he was struck at how the sustainability categories relates to our gut priorities.

Kyra asks that we add child care.

Anna explains that we need to come together as a group to create questions we want to bring to the focus groups. We need to talk about the missing pieces.

Larry states that it is also missing vulnerable populations. Whether that’s affordable housing, health assistance, etc.

Jeanemarie states that we can look at these in relation to what other funding resources come into plan. This will also shape our priorities. If we don't fund X what are the other implications.

Anna explains that there's always a consequence to our decision, an economic impact of the decisions. She did some research. She explains some of the research she did. Researching them helped her to define the priorities. What are other communities doing? Both the Mayor and CM stated that by choosing priorities, some things will come off the table and what is the cost and benefit of both. Anna explains how she analyzed the priorities and set them into categories. The four categories included: Housing, Energy, Quality of Place and Jobs/Economic Development.

Larry states that by squeezing a bit you can be a catalyst for other things. There is limited money, and people can be creative.

Denis passes out a handout that describes funding cycles with four options. 1) You can provide a small amount of funding to the same programs year after year. 2) You can fund a small amount to different programs each year. 3) You can provide a larger amount to few programs and change programs each year. 4) You can fund one thing with a large amount of funding for three years. The committee discusses these options. They ask how it is currently funded. Amy explains that each year a number of the same programs get funded year after year. However each year new programs are added, few are dropped.

Anna returns the discussions to priorities. She asks why are our gut priorities were different than current priorities. Are there things happening in our current world that influence our gut priorities? How do we include the immigrant populations in this conversation? We have to figure out what is important to us before we can ask who needs to be part of this conversation.

Amy suggests not looking at the grant in funding silos but rather as priorities then addressing the separate funding categories within. Many members nod their head in agreement.

Group discusses how to address this process. The outcome is that we focus on the groups priorities before splitting into smaller groups. If we split first we may not have the rich discussions that we get in the group. They also discuss splitting up of tasks, research, publicity, etc

Anna presents her research. She researched each of the "gut" priorities that were presented earlier. Under each of the categories she asked four questions: a) Why is this a priority? b) Example of implementation. C) economic impact (tax/revenue consideration), and d) issues for focus groups- public improvement, social service and planning/ administration. She follows this discussion by asking the big question- who voices do we need to hear from the community?

The group reviews the papers that have been passed out.

They discuss the need for research to occur between meetings. Everyone will do more research on the topics that were presented by Anna. We will need lists of

groups who will need to participate. But first we need to know what the priorities are. Each person will look into two or three categories.

5) Relate Priority Categories to Funding Categories

The group decided to focus first on priorities and add the lens of funding categories later.

6) Relate Priority Categories to Focus Group Topics

The group decided to focus first on priorities and add the lens of focus group discussions later.

7) Nominate Chair/Vice Chair

Amy asks if anyone has a nomination for Chair and Vice Chair.

Kyra nominates Anna as Chair and Denis as Vice Chair. This is seconded by Jeannemarie. The group votes and it is unanimously approved.

Anna thanks the group and states that we all need to work as a group as a team and each person will have homework.

8) Housekeeping

- Notes- Voted yes.
- **Standing Meetings 2.5 hours meetings. 6:30-9 pm, on the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month.** Each person will have homework.
- There will be no meeting on alternative weeks at this time.
- Announcements, blog. www.portlandpriorities.blogspot.com Please check it out.

Homework:

Larry & Jon: Vulnerable Populations and how they relate to the priorities.
(Send Larry HUD's definition of vulnerable populations.)

Kyra: How Childcare fits in.
Jeannemarie: Housing & Sustainable

Rhonda: Walkable City

Denis: Quality of Place

Frank: Public Transportation

Frank: Energy

Wendy: Food Security

Anna: Jobs/ Economic Development

Amy: Crime & Demographics

Missing: Rachael, Shalom, Rachel

What local groups do we want at the table?

Next meeting: How do we use the blogspot? Update homework.