

**CDBG Priority Task Force**  
**Meeting 12: Tuesday September 23, 2008**  
**7:30-9:00am Room 209 City Hall**

Attendance: Wendy Harmon, Rhonda Juneau, Denis Lachman, Kyra Walker, Larry Gross, Frank Gallagher, Rachel Weyand, and Jeannemarie Celentano and Anna Priluck by phone.

Staff members: Deb Marquis, Alex Jaegerman, Jeanie Bourke, Lt. Bill Preis, Rachel Talbot Ross, Penny Littlell, T.J. Martzial, and Amy Grommes Pulaski.

**Introduction**

Amy thanks everyone for coming. She goes over a housekeeping items at the beginning, rather than at the end of the meeting. We will be holding the meeting scheduled for Thursday at 7:30-9:00am in room 209. The agenda for this meeting will be to review the definitions and descriptions that Task Force members wrote to describe the principles and priorities for recommendations. It's important to hold and attend this meeting, because time is running short, and its important for the TF to begin to be able discuss their recommendations cohesively. Please try to attend.

The upcoming meetings will be October 1 to prepare for the Council Workshop on October 6. We will also have a public forum on October 7 (which can be postponed a week if necessary).

In addition to the TF outreach meetings, there will be councilor neighborhood meetings in the eligible districts 1, 2 and 3. Their meetings are scheduled for October 2, 8 or 15 and October 27. While it is not imperative for Task Force members to attend, it would be useful and help to bring those district councilors around to supporting the task force recommendations.

**CAP: Administration, Citizen Participation, Planning, Capacity Building & Studies**

Amy explains that there are a few things that can be funded on the CAP: grant administration, planning, citizen participation, capacity building and studies. We primarily fund salaries in grant administration and planning, plus citizen participation expenses. She introduces Deb Marquis.

**Administration and Capacity Building: Deb Marquis**

Deb hands out a chart that indicates which people and positions are funded with CDBG. HNS Administration, Planning, and Historic preservation fall under the CAP. This is a number that cannot be exceeded. Also on the worksheet there is Rehab, Home and Lead plus Code Enforcement/ Inspections which are program costs that fall under the development activities. Under the Planning and Administration CAP we pay for housing and neighborhood services, planning staff, and citizen participation. The citizen participation goes to fund the notebooks, brochures, outreach, and public meetings. Some of the citizen participation budget goes to printing notebooks and brochures and advertisements. The notebooks include all the applications from the agencies for the committee to review. Also under the Planning and Administration Cap there could be some capacity building and studies, however it would displace some of the salaries that are being paid from the grant. Anything that we fund new has to come from somewhere else. The cap also pays for the annual audit and fringe benefits. We help to pay a portion of fringe benefits for the funded positions.

Deb explains her chart. It includes positions and names and percentage of their salaries that are funded with CDBG. These salaries do not change much from year to year. However salaries continue to increase and the level of federal funding has not been increased in many years. If you increase one person's percentage, you have to decrease another person's percentage.

Frank asked about the vacant planner- was that cut or will that be filled. Alex explains that will be filled.

Larry asks how much dollars go with Rehab, HOME and Lead. The Task Force thinks in terms of CDBG that there is not much money going toward housing, but it would be helpful to know what other resources are going to fund housing and other programs. Deb says she will get that to Amy to send out.

Frank asks what year we are in for the LEAD grant. TJ says we are in year two.

Wendy asks how much in Lead, Rehab and Home are rolled over each year. She asks how well each program is going. Deb and TJ explain that each program is doing well; the home buyer program is a bit slow but is picking up due to the softening of prices. Wendy asks if people continue to repay, what is the default rate. TJ says for the last 20 months there has only been one payment problem, and that has been addressed. Wendy asks about a weatherization program. TJ explains that the weatherization is combined with the home rehab program, which requires the homeowner to bring the house up to code. The program focuses on energy efficiency but includes whole house rehabilitation.

### **Planning: Alex Jaegerman**

Alex explains that he is 30% CDBG funded along with three senior planners who are partially funded. Last year they organized the CDBG planning activities around sustainability: environment, economics, and community. Under environment there was a lot of effort spent on water resource program, water protection ordinance. The new senior planner has been working on the site plan ordinance provision. There is an environmental and sustainable committee that Bill Needleman helps to staff. There was a creative economy initiative, which Lee Urban worked on, which Alex is currently working on. This item will go to Council on October 6. This initiative focused on small creative businesses. Bill Needelman works on the waterfront development. We are beginning to work on the western waterfront. On economic development there is brown-fields and Bayside. We continue to do soil assessments; we contract with a soil engineer. There is also a business diversity committee that looks at chain businesses downtown that we are looking at. In the community category, we haven't done a lot of neighborhood planning. We have done a project on St. John Street with USM. It's limited in scope, but Alex considers it somewhat of a pilot project. The program on the books is the neighborhood foundation plan, which is beyond on capacity to implement. The USM project is a nice way to get involved. Institutional work, we continue to do projects with USM, UNE and Waynflete. Back to Bayside we are working on the scrap yard relocation and creating the Bayside Trail. We have made good progress on trail development. We have landscape designers and engineers on contract that will help to connect Tookies Bridge and Bayside. The only part that needs to be negotiated is the United Way/ Maine Health project that will need to be coordinated with the Bayside Trail.

Frank comments that given that this Task Force is focusing more effort on Economic development-where can the planning department help that? Alex says Bayside is a place where

we have done this. The Economic Development department is now in the manager's office. But the coordinated effort that Frank is referring to is a multi-disciplinary approach. Frank asks about the Creative Portland Corporation, is that connected to the creative economy. He asks if that is a way that CDBG can be utilized. Alex says possibly. It would be a quasi-governmental agency. This is something down the line. Frank says that if these things can work together.

Rachael Talbot Ross asks how that helps very low income people.

Denis states that we not talking about Economic Development, but rather community development. This would be focused on the small businesses. Alex says it wouldn't be the super low income. TJ says one example is a creative economy type company. We can help that organization expand if they plan to hire low income persons.

RTR says that it can be framed as far as workforce development work.

Frank asks about neighborhood planning. Would it be possible to dedicate the new senior planner to be a neighborhood planner? Alex says possibly, but questions whether that is the right strategy. With the three senior planners you get more time spent on eligible activities. There have been some advantages to doing that. The city likes to have versatility among planners and flexibility and cross training. If a staff member was dedicated to one area, you would lose some flexibility. Alex asks the question- where should we be going with neighborhood planning and how do we get there? It's more than the percentage of someone's salary; it's more about program development. How would the planning program help to move the priorities of this group forward- housing, economic development, transportation and safe communities. Alex suggests targeted geographically and comprehensively. Rather than spreading resources thin, it would be more focused in a specific area, like Bayside.

Anna asks Alex what is your view or vision for that coordination. How would that work with the current planners with the multidisciplinary working? Alex says some of the expertise that is required is not residing in the planning department, but to help the super poor is beyond the physical and land use planning but gets to coordinate not only with public services/ works but also how services are provided. He thinks TJ and Amy could act as a coordinator of many agencies/ disciplines and planning would be one of them. The physical plan could be used to document that effort. This year you may be focused on low/mod, but think and develop a strategy for developing the next focus. Planning should not be the central piece. TJ had a suggestion yesterday. If you developed a project as a strategic approach- if it was toward a specific project you could utilize the development activities funding.

Anna asks TJ if HCD staff could be the coordinator and the planning department could be a team player. How would that fit the current schedule?

TJ says there is a natural place for it and we are moving toward that type of coordination. Prior to the HCD Task Force the way this HCD funding process went; a certain amount went to planning/ admin etc. and the other projects used to submit applications. This year we had all applicants submit proposals and plans. These other programs were forced to analyze how they reflected CDBG initiatives and comprehensive plans. TJ also comments on his thought yesterday. He was trying to figure out how to fund neighborhood planning, without taking additional funds from the planning/ admin cap. The concept is that if a specific area and project were identified, the project specific planning could come be part of the development fee and not fall under the planning and administration cap.

Frank asks how we begin to figure out what areas are the ones we should focus on. What are the possibilities?

Denis refers to the principles and the salary positions. He asks how the rest of these positions should be funded. How does position X or Y directly affect the super poor or address the revitalization of the area. Why does the planning section of the grant not have to show the same rigor as say public infrastructure or community structures? Are we going to establish an equal playing field or different playing field?

TJ says good question. Planning and administration is not subject to the low income impact/people that Denis is alluding to. You do have to prove that your other categories do have to address low income activities.

Rachel Talbot Ross asks why the historic preservation/ compliance person is funded 30%. Alex says its long range planning. Just like ordinance development is eligible, so is historic preservation.

Anna states that it's a matter of resources. We must use CDBG funding in the best way that we can. Historically we have used it for large long range planning and shifting it toward low income impact projects would be a switch. Portland Oregon dedicates planners to specific low/income housing and other areas.

Anna asks how detailed their recommendations from the Task Force can be? Can we specify the area of the city that we would like to focus funding?

Frank says that we can turn to staff, but that's the question we have to answer.

Alex says the reality between coordination is less about who's in charge but more about creating a group that can work together. When we worked on Adams School, it didn't matter who was in charge, it mattered what needed to be done. It works well in our department based on how we are structured. Alex says if we focus on the low or very low income it would be a combined/collaborative effort.

### **Code Enforcement: Jeanie Bourke**

TJ introduces code enforcement funding and CDBG. CDBG cannot fund the general conduct of government. A few years ago HUD saw that CDBG was funding code enforcement in many cities around the country. In the past cities would send money to code enforcement office and only require that a few inspections to be conducted in low income areas. A few years ago HUD said that would have to be more specific. Our inspections program did begin to focus last year on Bayside and Parkside. It's still a work in progress, but we have moved a lot closer to HUD's definition of eligible code enforcement activities. He introduces Jeanie Bourke.

Jeanie explains the directed enforcement program. Inspections does a number of activities including building inspections, new construction, electrical, plumbing, framing, general assistance, pre-qualification for rental vouchers, food service, and health inspections. The division handles a number of complaints, poor living conditions, unsafe apartments, disrepairs, lack of heat. The division is trying to put some resources in full house inspections in Census tracts 4, 6, and 10. Staff will need to be allocated to these inspections, and the division proposed conducting 30-100 units to be inspected this year. They are not targeting buildings, but rather addressing a need. If there are building that needs to address a few issues, the code enforcement

officer will go back to do a full house inspection. It's somewhat like the housing program we did have 10 years ago, but was discontinued due to staff reductions.

Larry says that it is the type of thing the task force is working towards. Jeannie says it's a way to get ourselves back on track. There's no sense fixing up sidewalks etc if the houses are falling apart.

TJ says it's an effective revitalization tool. Jeanie says we are also working on specific houses; there has been an outbreak of bed bugs that they have had to address. Also there is a vacant building at 35 Mayo Street. We are working to keep it weather tight and secure.

Anna asks which areas need our attention most. Jeanie answers that the areas they have focused on Bayside and Parkside, is the areas that need the most attention.

### **Community Policing: Lt. Bill Preis**

Amy introduces Lt. Preis and Jeanine Kaserman, the community coordinator for Munjoy Hill. TJ says he has been very impressed with the knowledge of the community policing coordinators and their grasp issues in the community.

Lt Preis says that the community policing program received \$149,000 in CDBG funding for this year. That goes to pay 91% of the salary for four community policing coordinators. The coordinators are located at Midtown, also known as Bayside on Portland Street, Munjoy Hill on Atlantic Street, West End on Danforth and Parkside on Grant Street. There is a fifth community policing coordinator that serves the Portland Housing Authority properties, but is not funded with CDBG. In general the coordinators are imbedded in a neighborhood. It is the ultimate low barrier way to make contact with the police department, whether that is new citizens or other people who don't feel comfortable contacting the police.

Lt Preis considers the community policing coordinators as facilitators rather than service providers. Residents go to the coordinator to ask a question and she tries to hook them up with the services they need. In 2007 we tracked 200 individual people that were helped by the coordinators. Some examples include the CPPC, Community Partnership for Protecting Children- a partnership with DHHS, Casey Family Services, police department etc. It's a way to identify troubled children and get them help before it gets too bad. They work with Catholic Charities refugee services. They work with a number of services- summer lunch, elderly show shoveling, outreach. The coordinator at Midtown/Bayside sends a lot of time at the teen center, Preble Street Resource Center, Maine stay, etc. Although we are not service providers, we do help organize a few activities- like game days etc. All the coordinators are trained in facilitating neighborhood watch programs and help neighborhoods get that started. There is a monthly meeting to discuss and help identify hot spots. A group meets once a month to discuss different strategies. There is also a disorderly house ordinance. For the police department, it is surveillance. There is a lot more people who feel comfortable talking to community coordinators rather than the police department. Along with that is the relationship they have with local landlords. If there is a lot of apartments/ landlords- coordinating with landlords helps us gather data and solve cases, but also ensure that the landlords are using safe practices.

Larry says we have talked a lot about the energy crisis. Are you making any special efforts in getting involved in low income seniors/ adults with their energy concerns?

Janine says that there is how to get money MHNO is raising to get money how to get it to people in their neighborhoods. She is exploring how to get people who need help the help they need. And also there will be a number of individuals who have never received help before, but will need to this winter. We are working with Breggy Oil, which most seniors on the Hill use.

Wendy mentions a discussion with Doug Gardener to address the heating issue.

Anna asks where there are community policing areas and where there needs to be additional. Lt Preis says there is no Community policing in the Deering community.

Amy asks if there is need to have a community policing coordinator in East Bayside or in the Libbytown/ St. John Street area. Janine says East Bayside is part of her territory, with the exception of Kennedy Park, which is part of the Housing Authority and would be Shauna's responsibility. Libbytown/ St John falls under Parkside Community Policing.

TJ asks if there was a specific community policing office in Kennedy Park and a specific one in other Portland Housing site, would that be helpful.

Lt Preis explains that if there were more resources, it more is never bad.

TJ asks them if you had to prioritize some of the issues, what would be the biggest issue?

Janine says substance abuse. Lt Preis says drugs, drugs and drugs. Janine says in many households one or two family members are afflicted. It is tied into the property crimes. The vast majority of property crimes is tied into people who are addicted to crack.

Denis asks if the drug problem is increasing.

Lt Preis says that in the 1980s the drug of choice was crack, in 1990s heroin grew, now it's crack and cocaine. TJ asks if the drug issue spurs the violence, youth problems etc. Lt Preis says yes, drugs are the big problem. Janine says that a lot of the issues they deal with are drugs. The ordeals children are going through are horrifying.

Anna asks if code enforcement and community policing sees similar issues.

Jeanie says that there is a lot of coordination with community policing and code enforcement.

Lt PReis says the hot spot program focuses on this so we can look at a problem globally.

Denis asks if the hot spots move. Janine says it can if specific tenants move.

Larry asks if we could have a list of those people to give to landlords. Janine says Parkside has come up with a lot of training for landlords. This is a proactive approach.

Anna asks what areas are the biggest problems. Lt Preis explains that these are only his opinions, not the opinions of the entire police department or of the Chief. He lists the following:

- Grant Street between Deering and Mellen.
- Dow Street and Horton Place.
- Merrill Street
- Portland Street by resource Center
- Cumberland Avenue all the way across the peninsula

Anna asks Amy to follow up with Code Enforcement to see if they coordinate. This could help us identify the blighted spots.

Denis likes that code enforcement and community policing already coordinates. We are working on principles that help to have more of this.

Janine says there used to be a neighborhood task force that used to coordinate monthly. This has disappeared.

### **Housekeeping**

See the beginning of the meeting notes.

### **Additional info:**

Anna asked Amy to follow up with Jeanie Bourke from Code Enforcement to identify the area of the most problems. After the meeting Amy asked Jeanie to answer Anna's question. Her responses are below:

- Congress St bayside to midtown
- Cumberland Avenue
- Grant street
- Portland street and Alder Street
- Mayo and Anderson
- Horton Place
- Merrill Street