

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACT ADVISORY COMMITTEE
(CDAAC)
October 8, 2009
Minutes

**Development Center
445 W. Michigan Ave., Suite 101
Kalamazoo, MI 49007**

Members Present: Mildred Smith, Chair; Buddy Hannah, Vice Chair; David Bills;
Shirley Coleman; Charley Coss; Trent Hines

Members Absent: None

Guests: Greg Milliken (McKenna Associates); Pat McCarthy

City Staff: Laura Lam, Community Development Manager;
Andrea Augustine, Neighborhood Planner;
Claudette Cobbs, Grants Finance Officer;
Jackie Haske, Recording Secretary.

CALL TO ORDER

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.

ROLL CALL

Ms. Haske conducted roll call of CDAAC members and determined quorum existed.

AGENDA (October 8, 2009)

Mr. Coss, supported by Mr. Bills, moved approval of the October 8, 2009 CDAAC agenda as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES (August 6, 2009) & NOTES (September 10, 2009)

Ms. Coleman, supported by Mr. Hannah, moved approval of the August 6, 2009 CDAAC minutes as submitted. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Notes were created from the September 10, 2009 CDAAC meeting, for which quorum did not exist. **Mr. Hannah, supported by Mr. Hines, voiced approval of the September 10, 2009 CDAAC notes as submitted. There was a unanimous consensus.**

CITIZEN COMMENTS ON NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None.

COMMUNICATIONS/MEMBERS' REPORTS

Ms. Lam stated that the vacant position previously occupied by Mr. Thomas will change to emphasize experience with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and grant compliance. The Community Development Compliance Specialist position has been posted externally and internally. She stated until that position is filled, City staff members Andrea Augustine, Gracia Mason, and Claudette Cobbs will assist.

Ms. Lam then stated Mr. Kinsey has resigned from CDAAC, with discussion on the Nominating Committee following new business.

OLD BUSINESS

CDAAC MARKETING PIECE

Mr. Hines stated the Nominating Committee has edited the original piece for reader ease. Mr. Bills stated he would like people from Kalamazoo College and Western Michigan University become involved, and added the flyer will be distributed at coffee shops and other downtown locations with the business owner's permission. Mr. Coss suggested the neighborhood associations also receive the flyer to distribute. Ms. Augustine stated staff would assist in distributing flyers while distributing a separate flyer regarding the Master Plan update.

Mr. Coss, supported by Mr. Bills, moved to discuss the adoption of the flyer as official CDAAC marketing material. With a voice vote, the motion carried.

Mr. Milliken suggested the piece be converted to a .pdf document for our website as well as for easy electronic distribution. Mr. Coss agreed.

Mr. Coss, supported by Mr. Bills, moved to adopt the flyer as official CDAAC marketing material, and accept the City's assistance with distribution. With a voice vote, the motion carried.

NOMINATING COMMITTEE UPDATES

Mr. Bills stated that there are a few people interested in membership but no one has been interviewed.

Ms. McCarthy stated that her goal is to get more Vine representatives on CDAAC, and stated a few candidates have been noted. As her membership is pending, she stated she will attend the CDAAC meetings to stay informed in the interim. She clarified that she is not paid by the Vine Neighborhood Association, but is paid via a grant that is not City-funded. She would like to serve as either an At-Large member or a Vine representative, whichever the City Commission desires with the least amount of conflict.

Mr. Coss stated per the bylaws, the Vine board would need to nominate her as a

representative for Vine, but not for an At-Large membership. (At this time, Ms. Cobbs joined the meeting.) Mr. Hines clarified that due to conflicts of interest, Mr. Kinsey, an Edison board member, abstained from certain votes, and suggested Ms. McCarthy could do the same if appointed to the vacant Vine representative position. Mr. Coss suggested Ms. McCarthy inform Vine that they should try to get someone on CDAAC as soon as possible for a voting presence.

Earlier in the meeting, Ms. Lam informed members that Mr. Kinsey has resigned from CDAAC. She then discussed appointing a new Chair of the Nominating Committee to replace Mr. Kinsey. Mr. Coss clarified that the Nominating Committee is an ad hoc committee. Ms. Haske confirmed that per the April 2009 CDAAC minutes, the remaining members of the Nominating Committee are Mr. Bills, Mr. Hannah and Mr. Hines. **Mr. Coss stated he would like to be on the Nominating Committee, but not as Chair. Mr. Bills then volunteered to be the Nominating Committee Chair, which Ms. Smith confirmed.**

NEW BUSINESS

2010-2014 CONSOLIDATED PLAN PUBLIC MEETING UPDATE

Mr. Milliken introduced himself as the representative from McKenna Associates, the consulting firm facilitating the Consolidated Plan update. Mr. Milliken stated the next CDAAC meeting will include a public hearing to discuss the draft of the Plan. He then summarized the findings from the recent public input sessions. He stated five of six scheduled neighborhood meetings have taken place, with the final meeting to take place October 22 at the Fairmont Neighborhood Association. The purpose of these meetings has been to inform residents of the Plan and assess public needs and priorities. He stated part of the process is to gather information on where the public would like to see funding being spent, such as housing or infrastructure. Although each neighborhood is unique in its desires and needs, overlapping themes developed.

Mr. Milliken stated local agencies and services were universal strengths, while housing issues such as vacancies and youth activities were universal weaknesses. Another issue brought up multiple times was the perceived lack of communication between the City and neighborhoods. Mr. Coss asked if this problem was related to ordinances or day-to-day functions, to which Mr. Milliken replied that it encompassed all forms of communication, and became an emotional subject for some. Complaints included neighborhoods being unaware of City changes, and information about housing, funding, and jobs.

Mr. Milliken went on to explain that some priorities discussed continually included job training and retention, low-income housing, and making use of vacant housing rather than demolishing stock and starting anew. Infrastructural issues such as sidewalk repair were also seen as a priority as well as jobs and activities for youth. Many people commented that they would like to see more mentorship and training offered to homeowners, as the housing stock in Kalamazoo is aging and requires maintenance.

Mr. Milliken stated the next steps include working with City staff to pull together the public input, demographical, and other data, followed by drafting the plan and presenting it at the public hearing. Afterward, there will be a 30-day public comment period followed by a second public hearing on January 2, 2010, wrapping up the Plan with CDAAC's recommendation for City Commission approval.

Mr. Bills asked about public participation at the neighborhood meetings, to which Mr. Milliken replied that 70 people total attended the five meetings, ranging from 20 people at the Vine meeting to five people at the meeting at the public library. He added that there is an opportunity for online feedback at www.kalamazoocity.org/conplanfeedback, but only one response has been received.

Mr. Coss, who had been a CDAAC member during the last Consolidated Plan update, stated that the City struggles to find grantees or opportunities regarding economic development and this area is difficult to score in HUD's matrix. He also encouraged cooperative ventures with WMU and Kalamazoo College, and explained one weakness is that the "red tape" attached to economic development requires much reporting. He stated in the past he has suggested the Chamber of Commerce become a central agency for economic development opportunities to streamline reporting. Ms. Augustine added that the Small Business Revolving Loan Fund (SBRLF) has faced similar reporting problems. Ms. Cobbs added that the SBRLF is still available, but either more applicants need to apply or the loan amount needs to be increased, as the SBRLF has little interest. Mr. Hines added that the funding available per applicant via the SBRLF (\$40,000) is too small, given administrative overhead.

Mr. Bills asked what tactics could be implemented to increase diversity at the public meetings. Mr. Milliken commented that Master Plan update meetings have had tremendous response, and part of the problem may be confusion between the two plans as well as "federal fatigue" (unwillingness to attend multiple public meetings). He added that a wider timeline for preparation may have helped increase response. Ms. Augustine added that the Master Plan consultants are sharing information with McKenna Associates per the concurrent planning events, as some of the needed information overlaps. Ms. McCarthy added that the economy is very different than during the last Consolidated Plan update, and because of this, people may be wary to engage in public discourse. She added that meetings should be as easy and convenient to attend.

After a short discussion about the recent Vine neighborhood open house, Mr. Milliken stated that a draft of the Consolidated Plan would be available prior to the November 12, 2009 public hearing and regular CDAAC meeting for members to review.

PY2010 CDBG – OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Ms. Lam advised as the next funding year approaches, more pots of funding are available, and changes occur in City staff, a discussion about CDBG and possible changes should be considered. She suggested a separate meeting, such as a retreat, to have these discussions. She clarified that the conversation would include many pieces,

one of which regarded the possibility of shifting the start of the Program Year from June 1 to July 1 to better align with the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) program years.

Ms. Augustine commented that the Planning Commission often attends such off-site retreats to stimulate discussion. She stated both MSHDA and HUD have suggested changes to the City’s program, and a retreat would be a vehicle for discussion. Mr. Coss added that this could become an annual planning strategy for CDAAC. **Ms. Smith asked for member approval, to which members unanimously approved having a retreat via a voice consensus.**

Ms. Lam suggested the retreat occur within the next few weeks to align with the CDBG timeline created by Mr. Thomas, former City staff liaison. Mr. Coss and Ms. Smith refreshed the board about the timeline for CDBG application review, which occurs between Thanksgiving and Christmas, giving members a few weeks to review applications and form subcommittees prior to recommendations. Keeping this timetable in mind, discussion occurred regarding a date and time for the retreat. **With a voice consensus, members agreed to have a retreat on Monday, October 19, 2009 at 5:30pm.** Ms. Augustine advised, per the Open Meetings Act, anytime quorum is met or deliberation occurs, meetings have to be noticed to the public. City staff informed members that more information, including an agenda and location, would be forthcoming. Mr. Coss added that he would like to discuss quorum rules in the by-laws during the retreat, suggesting a short quorum for non-funding issues, such as approving minutes. Ms. Lam stated the current by-laws would be included in the packet for future discussion. Ms. McCarthy commented that Vine Ventures takes electronic quorum and approval of minutes.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

None.

ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Hannah, supported by Mr. Hines, moved to adjourn the October 8, 2009 CDAAC meeting. With a voice vote, the motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Smith adjourned the meeting at 7:45 p.m.

Submitted by: _____ Dated: _____
(Recording Secretary)

Reviewed by: _____ Dated: _____
(Staff Liaison)

Approved by: _____ Dated: _____