

CDBG PUBLIC HEARING
Borough of Edinboro
August 13, 2018

Welcome to the Public Hearing:

Mayor Gast opened the public hearing at 5:47 p.m. Council members present were Pat Davis, Fred Langill, Jim Kiley, Nathan Latimer, Alyssa Dobson, Aaron Gast, and Mary Ann Horne. Also present were Manager Kevin Opple, Finance Director Jason Spangenberg, Joe Berdis of Erie County Planning, and Maryann Mook. Mayor Gast turned the meeting over to Joe Berdis.

Purpose of Hearing:

This public hearing is the first of two public hearings regarding the Borough's FY 2018 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the PA Department of Community and Economic Development. Notice of hearing appeared in the Erie Times News on Sunday, August 5. No comments were received. The second and final hearing will be scheduled at a date and time to be determined. This hearing is to provide information on the CDBG program, review/update the Three Year CDBG Plan, and discuss how the Borough may want to utilize its CDBG funding.

Background Information:

The Borough is entitled to receive an annual allocation of CDBG funds from the PA DCED pursuant to PA Act 179 of 1984. Since 1985 the Borough has received approximately \$4.5 million in funding. Exhibit 1 was reviewed showing allocations from 1985 to 2018. The FY 2018 allocation of \$111,928 is an increase of \$10,250 from FY 2017. Approximately 10% of the allocation (\$11,000) will be set aside for administration. The submission deadline for the application to DCED requesting the funding November 2, 2018.

Eligible Activities:

CDBG funds can be used for a wide array of activities which include, but are not limited to: water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, street reconstruction, sidewalk/curb replacement, recreation improvements, housing rehabilitation, homeownership assistance, property acquisition, fair housing activities, handicapped accessibility improvements, planning activities (subject to 15% cap), and administration (subject to 18% cap). Exhibit 2 was reviewed, which identified the eligible and ineligible activities. Exhibit 3 was also reviewed, which identified the Borough projects from the last 4 fiscal years that have been funded by CDBG.

CDBG Program Requirements:

Activities must meet one of the three National Objectives of the program:

- ✓ Principally benefit low-to-moderate income persons

- ✓ Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight
- ✓ Meet a community development need having a particular urgency, because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health and welfare of the community, and other financial resources are not available to meet the need

The primary objective is to benefit low-to-moderate income persons and at least 51% of the funds must go towards meeting this objective. That means 51% of the persons benefiting from an activity are of low-to-moderate income. An LMI person is an individual/family whose income does not exceed 80% of median income. Exhibit 4 was reviewed, showing current income limits.

Determining concentrations of LMI persons in a community:

Concentrations of LMI persons can be determined in one of two ways:

- ✓ American Community Survey (ACS) 2006-2010 Data: ACS data can be referenced when a project's benefit area coincides with a census geographic area - census tract/block group - that has an LMI concentration of 51% or above.
- ✓ Income Surveys – this is the most widely used method as most communities do not have census geographic areas that are 51% or above and most project benefit areas do not coincide with a census geographic area

Mr. Berdis discussed how the above relates to the completed Monroe Street project. Monroe Street is a minor collector street within the Lakeside area. A collector road collects traffic from local roads and distributes it to arterial roads. Improvements to Monroe Street primarily benefit all residents of the Lakeside area which according to census information has a LMI population of 61.8%. A survey was not required since the census data showed Lakeside as primarily LMI. Mr. Berdis reviewed the map contained within the packet showing the six block groups that the Borough is broken into, which shows that Lakeside and the Stonehaven/Darrow section of the Borough are the only two that qualify for CDBG funding based on the census data.

There are activities which do not require a survey nor depend on census information to qualify for funding. These are activities which according to HUD will benefit clientele who are generally presumed to be principally low-to-moderate income persons. This clientele includes abused children, elderly persons, battered spouses, homeless persons, disabled adults, illiterate adults, persons living with the disease AIDS, and migrant farm workers. Examples of these activities include installation of curb-cut ramps, improvements to a senior center, and handicapped accessibility to a municipal building. Another activity which would not require a survey nor depend on census information to qualify for funding would be housing rehabilitation assistance for income qualified, single family, owner-occupied persons.

Mr. Berdis asked if there were any questions on what had been discussed to this point. No questions were asked.

Review and update of three year community development plan and discuss possible FY 2018 projects:

The Borough's housing objectives were stated as follows, with Manager Opplé confirming there was no change from last year for this: the community's housing stock is relatively modern and there exists a well-established code enforcement program. As such, Borough officials contend there is no urgent need to undertake a single family and/or rental housing rehabilitation program. Continue to enforce building and related codes to promote sound maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing units.

Mr. Berdis listed the public facilities needs and objectives:

- Street reconstruction/rehabilitation is an ongoing need of the Borough. Monroe Street was recently reconstructed utilizing multi-year CDBG funding. Other streets in need of repair are Darrow Road and Stonehaven Drive.
- Sidewalks in several neighborhoods need to be replaced as they are severely deteriorated posing safety hazards for pedestrians.
- Many pedestrian crossings throughout the Borough do not have curb-cut ramps for handicapped accessibility.
- Reconstruction of Darrow Road from South Perry Lane to Heather Road.
- Reconstruction of Stonehaven Drive.
- Construction of accessible curb-cut ramps at pedestrian crossings throughout the Borough.

Manager Opplé confirmed that these objectives were accurate, and he asked that a potential new playground on Stonehaven Drive be added to the list of projects with CDBG funding. He said that the playground priority would be below paving. Mr. Berdis stated that such a neighborhood park would qualify for funding. Alyssa Dobson asked about the potential impact of the upcoming update to the census figures used to determine eligible projects. Mr. Berdis replied that it is uncertain whether or not previously approved projects could lose funding based on a change in census figures; it would depend on the wording of the relevant memo from HUD. Mary Ann Horne stated that this has previously happened to us, with upgrades to the dam losing funding after approval.

Other streets or neighborhoods that might qualify for projects were discussed. The HANDS-owned houses on Scots Glen were brought up since they are for lower income families. Ms. Horne asked about Ontario Street. Manager Opplé replied that Ontario would likely not qualify, since student rentals require the students' parents to take the income surveys.

Mr. Berdis asked about the official plan for FY 2018 and beyond. Manager Opplé said that FY 2017 and a portion of FY 2018 funds would be used to reconstruct Darrow Road. The remainder of 2018 funds would be used for the Stonehaven playground, and FY 2019 funds would be allocated for reconstruction of Stonehaven Drive.

Manager Opple confirmed that there would be no changes to the Public Service or Economic Development objectives listed in the plan.

Joe Berdis summarized the results of the hearing, repeating what Manager Opple had stated as the plan for use of upcoming funds. He said that more details on these projects would be requested before the next CDBG hearing.

Adjournment:

The public hearing was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.

ATTEST:



Manager Kevin Opple



Mayor Aaron Gast