

**CDBG PUBLIC HEARING**  
**Borough of Edinboro**  
**July 10, 2017**

**Welcome to the Public Hearing:**

Mayor Horne opened the Public Hearing at 5:45 p.m. Council members present were Pat Davis, Brenda Cannell, Jim Kiley, and Mary Ann Horne. Absent were Nathan Latimer, Stephen O'Neill, and Aaron Gast. Also present were Manager Kevin Oppe, Finance Director Jason Spangenberg, Joe Berdis of Erie County Planning, Dustin Noel, Nancy Crawford, John Boylan, Karen Eisenhart, Mary Ann Schenck, Debbie McElroy, and Michael Fiekles. Mayor Horne 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 2017 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 Thursday June 29th. 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 \$4.3 million in funding. Exhibit 1 was reviewed showing allocations from 1985 to 2016. FY 2017 allocation still unknown but we anticipate it will be the same as last year's grant which was \$102,964. Approximately 10% of the allocation will be set aside for administration. DCED sets the cap at 18%. The date to submit the application to DCED requesting the funding is unknown but we believe it will be due sometime in October or November of this year. This may be the last year of funding as the President has called for the elimination of the program for Fiscal Year 2018.

**Eligible Activities:**

CDBG funds can be used for a wide array of activities which include, but are not limited to: Water, sanitary sewer, and storm sewer construction, 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 Borough projects from the last 3 fiscal years that have been funded by CDBG. The Monroe Street project was discussed, which used CDBG funds for 2013 through 2016 and has \$11,275.37 remaining to be paid from the 2017 CDBG allocation.

## **Ineligible Activities:**

Activities which cannot be assisted with CDBG funds include improvements to a municipal building, unless the improvement will remove an architectural barrier to provide accessibility for a disabled person, purchase of construction equipment, normal maintenance and repair – patching pot holes, clearing drainage ditches of debris, mowing grass at parks, snow removal, etc., financing of political activities, or new housing construction.

## **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 3 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 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.

Income surveys were taken for potential projects on Hickory Street, Harrison Drive, Cove Drive, and Davis Drive, but the surveys revealed that these areas had too high of income to be eligible for CDBG funding.

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 a 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.

**Review and update of three year community development plan and discuss possible FY 2017 projects:**

Mr. Berdis read through a portion of the three-year plan, which reiterated some of what had previously been mentioned. He then discussed the housing situation in the Borough. The 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) data indicated that there are 2,628 total housing units in the Borough -- 2,220 or 84.5% of which are occupied and 408 or 15.5% of which are vacant. Of the occupied units, 844 or 38% are owner-occupied and 1,376 or 62% are renter occupied. By comparison, the 2015 ACS data for Erie County as a whole indicated that there are 119,827 total housing units – 109,934 or 91.7% of which are occupied and 9,893 or 8.3% of which are vacant. Of the occupied units, 72,273 or 65.7% are owner-occupied and 37,661 or 34.3% are renter occupied. These statistics show that Edinboro has a much higher rental percentage and vacancy percentage compared to Erie County as a whole. He added that houses in Edinboro are generally newer than Erie County as a whole, with 18.6% of houses built before 1939, compared to 26.8% for the County.

The Borough's housing objectives were stated as follows, with Mayor Horne 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 reconstructed in August 2016 utilizing multi-year CDBG funding (*Note: FY 2016 CDBG funds will be used to reimburse the Borough for local monies advanced for construction costs*). Other streets in need of repair are Darrow Road, Ontario Street, and High Street.
- 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.

- Installation of new asphalt wearing surface and drainage improvements along Darrow Road between Heather Road and Perry Lane. (This project would qualify LMI using the HUD Census Block Group LMI Data- 74.84% LMI)
- Full depth reclamation of Ontario Street along with construction of sidewalks, curbs, driveway transition aprons, drainage improvements and tree plantings. (Will require a survey to determine “fundability”)
- Full depth reclamation of High Street along with construction of sidewalks, curbs, driveway transition aprons, drainage improvements and tree plantings. (Will require a survey to determine “fundability”)
- Sidewalk replacement and curb-cut ramp construction along Water Street between Normal Street and Green Oaks Drive. (Will require a survey to determine “fundability”)
- Construction of accessible curb-cut ramps at pedestrian crossings throughout the Borough.

Manager Opplé asked that Stonehaven Drive be added to the list of potential streets for improvement with CDBG funding. Council briefly discussed that houses on Ontario Street are primarily student rentals, which makes it unlikely that an income survey would come back favorable for CDBG funding, since student renter income is not used.

Mr. Berdis stated that public service projects, such as child care or senior citizen services, are eligible for funding but he recommended using other funding sources for such projects.

The short-term plan for CDBG projects was stated as installation of new asphalt wearing surface and drainage improvements along Darrow Road between Heather Road and Perry Lane. Mayor Horne and Manager Opplé agreed. Mr. Berdis said that a survey would not be needed for this project.

The Monroe Street project was again discussed, with Mr. Berdis stating that the entire 2017 CDBG allocation could be used for Darrow Road if the remaining \$11,275.37 for Monroe Street would be paid by the General Fund. Jason Spangenberg said that either way, General Fund money would be used, but we would discuss it. Mr. Berdis asked that Mr. Spangenberg send a letter in the next month requesting that the Borough be reimbursed \$71,136.53 from the 2016 CDBG allocation for money spent on the Monroe Street project.

The long-term plan was stated as:

- Full depth reclamation of Ontario Street along with construction of sidewalks, curbs, driveway transition aprons, drainage improvements and tree plantings. (*Will require a survey to determine “fundability”*)

- Full depth reclamation of High Street along with construction of sidewalks, curbs, driveway transition aprons, drainage improvements and tree plantings. *(Will require a survey to determine "fundability")*
- Sidewalk replacement and curb-cut ramp construction along Water Street between Normal Street and the Green oaks Drive. *(Will require a survey to determine "fundability")*

If none of the above projects qualify, then the Borough would likely undertake the following:

- Construction of accessible curb-cut ramps at pedestrian crossings throughout the Borough.

Manager Opple asked that Stonehaven Drive again be added as an option.

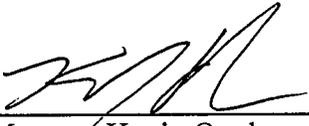
**Public Comment:**

Dustin Noel, representing the Draketown Christian Church, asked about the requirements for using CDBG funding for a single-family home in need of renovation, for one of the Church members. Joe Berdis explained the process. The decision would be up to Council to allow use of the funds for this purpose. Brenda Cannell asked what amount of money would be needed in order to repair the referenced home. Mr. Noel did not have a price but said that roof repair would be needed. He added that the Church would be willing to match funds to help the family. Mr. Berdis said that the funds would take at least a year and a half to be received, so they should not be used for urgent safety matters. Mr. Noel thanked Mr. Berdis and Council.

**Adjournment:**

The Public Hearing was adjourned at 6:25 p.m.

ATTEST:

  
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 Manager Kevin Opple

  
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 Mayor Mary Ann Horne