

**Meeting Minutes
State College Borough
CDBG/Citizens' Advisory Committee
June 25, 2019**

The State College Borough Community Development Block Grant/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CDBG/CAC) meeting was called to order by Selden Smith, Chair, on Tuesday, June 25, 2019 at 12:06 p.m. in the Municipal Building, 243 South Allen Street.

Members Present

Selden Smith, Chair; Rebecca Misangyi, Vice-Chair; David Gaines; Marcia Patterson; and Jason Olcese

Members Absent

Alexis Burke, and Bruce Quigley

Others Present

Morgan Wasikonis, Housing Transitions, Inc. (HTI); Colleen Ritter, State College Community Land Trust (SCCLT)

Annual Community Assessment

Ms. Safko noted staff received a letter from Housing and Urban Development (HUD) regarding the Annual Community Assessment. She stated staff provided a summary of accomplishments from the prior year. An important item to note was, HUD determined the Borough was in compliance with the statute by expending funds and meeting goals. A new compliance area HUD started to review for was the "origin year grant expenditure test". She stated funds were drawn in error in 2015, but by 2016, those funds were returned, and the Borough was in compliance. The letter also stated the Borough was meeting the timeliness standards. The 5-year Consolidation Plan noted the Borough's priorities. The Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity (FHEO) reviewed the Consolidated Annual Performance Evaluation Report (CAPER) to make sure the Borough was doing what they reported in their Fair Housing Analysis report. The FHEO had no negative comments regarding the Borough's progress toward addressing impediments to Fair Housing.

CAC comments:

- Mr. Smith, Chair, asked if there needed to be a response. Ms. Safko stated that there must be a reply, but that it will be shorter than it has in the past few years since there are fewer comments to address.
- Mr. Gaines asked how the number of beneficiaries was calculated for the curb ramp replacement project. Ms. Safko stated that this information was based on Census Data along with data that HUD supplied to the Borough. She also stated there are two options for documenting benefit for accessibility projects. HUD presumes that people with disabilities meet low-to-moderate income

guidelines. So, project eligibility could be based on the fact that it is undertaken for the primary benefit of disabled people. However, HUD prefers documentation of area wide income eligibility, which is the method used in this case, where this improvement was constructed in a Census tract where a majority of residents meet low-moderate income guidelines.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Gaines and seconded by Ms. Patterson to approve the May 7, 2019 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Mr. Smith, Chair, stated that he attended the Community Needs meeting and noted the main suggestion was to focus on a smaller number of issues to make a bigger impact and to spend more funding on Human Service agencies.

Public Hour

The public did not wish to discuss items not on the agenda.

2020-2024 Fair Housing Analysis Update

Ms. Safko noted the purpose was for the Committee to receive the document and that no action was required until the meeting on August 6, 2019.

She discussed the Fair Housing Analysis development process briefly. Ms. Safko noted that the following sources of data were used: 1) 2010 CENSUS and 2) America's Community Survey from 2013-2017 along with community input.

Extensive consultation with local human service agencies and others in the community including the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition (CCAHC) and Centre County Advisory Committee to the Pennsylvania Human Relations Commission Advisory Council.

Executive Summary of the Analysis included

Ms. Safko noted two impediments 1) a lack of affordable housing and financing with the objective that the Borough would continue to pursue expanding housing choices, continue to fund the First-Time Homebuyer (FTHB), rehabilitation and rental acquisitions programs, and work with CCAHC to develop a regional wide housing marketing analysis; 2) inadequate bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure with the objective to improve multi-modal transportation to increase the affordability of living and working in the Borough.

CAC's comments

- Mr. Smith asked how to find the most effective bicycle/pedestrian project areas. Ms. Safko stated coordination is underway with the Borough's Public Works Department and with Trish Meek at Centre Region Council of Governments. She

noted funding was projected in the Borough's 5-year CDBG Capital Improvement Plan in 2023 or 2024 allowing time for the Borough to apply for additional grants.

- Ms. Misangyi asked if the missing links in the paths were within the Borough. Ms. Safko stated CDBG funds would need to be spent on work completed inside the Borough that would benefit Borough residents. She said that discussions were very preliminary and that it could be necessary to partner with other townships.
- Mr. Smith asked if the Borough could ask the local bicycle advocacy group for input and Ms. Safko stated they could be utilized.
- Mr. Olcese asked if the Borough would be interested in transitional housing, not for students, but geared more to single families. He suggested finding investors that cared about affordable housing and were willing to work with the Borough. Ms. Safko pointed out that the Borough is fortunate to have two affordable housing partners that were present at the meeting, including the State College Community Land Trust and the Temporary Housing Foundation that work closely with the Borough to create new opportunities for single family households to access both rental and for-sale affordable housing.

Ms. Wasikonis of Temporary Housing Foundation agreed with Mr. Olcese and noted the need was moving toward one-bedroom apartments and finding those was a challenge.

- Mr. Olcese stated the need for a focus on 21-30 year old people. There were not as many housing and jobs opportunities here compared to larger cities.
- Mr. Smith stated, because of the increasing supply of luxury, student housing downtown, there should be more affordable housing stock available.

Ms. Safko stated there was travel-to-work information in this report. Also, she noted it would be helpful if some of the student rental units that come available could be made available as affordable housing for families that currently have long commutes to work in State College Borough.

Due to the extensive discussion regarding these two impediments, committee members were asked to review the balance of the impediments found in the Executive Summary and in the document, prior to the next meeting.

2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan

Ms. Safko stated that the public process revealed needs very similar to those in past Consolidated Plans: 1) balance funding for housing needs with the need for infrastructure improvements; and 2) support decent and affordable housing and human service agencies. One priority need identified is the homeless. While CDBG funding is budgeted towards Human Service agencies that provide affordable housing; she noted that there was a growing community conversation with Out of the Cold, Housing Transitions and other members of the Centre County Affordable Housing Coalition regarding providing a shelter for the homeless. Ms. Safko also reviewed the budget drafted for the FY 2020 Annual Action Plan.

All CAC members were provided with a printed copy of the two documents (2020-2024 Fair Housing Analysis Update and 2020-2024 Consolidated Plan and 2020 Annual Action Plan) and were asked to review them to be ready for more discussion and to take

action on August 6, 2019 to recommend the two plans to Council for approval pending a public comment period..

Upcoming Meeting

Tuesday, August 6, 2019 at Noon

Adjournment

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 p.m. by Ms. Patterson and seconded by Ms. Misangyi.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise L. Rhoads
Administrative Assistant