

**Meeting Agenda
State College Borough
CDBG/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC)
August 18, 2020
Virtual Meeting**

The State College Borough (SCB) Community Development Block Grant/Citizens' Advisory Committee (CDBG/CAC) virtual Zoom meeting was called to order by Selden Smith, Chair, on Tuesday, August 18, 2020 at 12:03 p.m.

Members Present

Selden Smith, Chair; Ian Boswell; David Gaines, Vice-Chair; Jason Olcese; and Marcia Patterson

Members Absent

Alexis Burke and Bruce Quigley

Others Present

Maureen H. Safko, Senior Planner; Isabel Storey, Senior Planner; Denise L. Rhoads, Administrative Assistant; Sarah Potter, Out of the Cold (OOTC); Linda Barton, volunteer English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher; and Mark Huncik, Redevelopment Authority (RDA) member and Highlands Civic Association President.

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Mr. Gaines and seconded by Mr. Olcese to approve the August 4, 2020 minutes as submitted. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Chair Report

Selden Smith, Chair, noted there was a discussion last time on having someone from the Public Works Department to talk about fees, etc. Due to their busy schedules and being short staffed they were not able to attend at this time.

Public Hour

No one from the public wanted to discuss items not on the agenda.

Public Hearing on Housing & Community Development Needs and Proposed Strategies for Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing

Mr. Smith asked Ms. Potter to share the letter she emailed to staff.

Ms. Potter stated OOTC wanted to thank the SCB for their help and collaboration with the homelessness issue. OOTC was requesting funds for a down payment for a more permanent homeless shelter which would allow them to better manage and care for the homeless population. She noted numbers were currently doubled from what had been the norm. OOTC was supporting nine high risk guests in local hotel rooms, and five people who were homeless but chose not to come into shelter. Ms. Potter noted OOTC anticipated the numbers would continue to grow in the months ahead. She stated the volunteer pool had decreased and as well as help from local churches. She stated OOTC was very thankful for the CDBG-CV funds that helped considerably.

CAC Comments

- Mr. Smith asked what perimeter boundary would be most helpful when looking for a location to build. Ms. Potter stated easy accessibility to public transportation was important.
- Mr. Olcese asked if anyone was actively looking at properties. Ms. Potter stated the OOTC board was starting to look for properties. Mr. Olcese asked what the price of the down payment they were looking for and Ms. Potter stated it was too early in the process to determine this.

Ms. Barton asked what staff needed from her. Ms. Safko noted this needs hearing was to make comments/suggestions in preparation for the 2021 Consolidated Annual Action Plan (CAAP) rather than for information on funds that had already been approved for the 2020 budget; and asked Ms. Barton if she would like to provide an update regarding the needs that she sees for the Limited English Proficient population that she and other English as a Second Language teachers and volunteers are assisting. Ms. Barton noted that the grassroot organization is currently assisting about 20 families and that two families had to move from the area due to lack of work and inability to afford living here. This impacted the students who will need to find support in a new school district. She noted they also raised funds for food, medical expenses, and donated bicycles for those who needed transportation to work.

Ms. Safko asked Ms. Barton about the geographic area of the families. Ms. Barton stated they were from the Easterly Parkway/Marvin Gardens area, with a few from Boalsburg, Lemont and some on Martin Street. Ms. Safko stated the efforts of Ms. Barton and other teachers are one of the success stories to come out of the pandemic and was a real showcase of compassion and hard work that is appreciated and impactful on the community.

Ms. Safko's brief overview of CDBG Program Information for the 2021 CAAP included:

- The program must benefit a population with incomes that are low- and moderate-income, that were less than 80 percent of Area Median Income (AMI) as determined by HUD. Income determination can be done using Census data or by a primary benefit to a population presumed by HUD as meeting income guidelines such as the elderly, homeless, disabled and victims of domestic violence.
- Eligible Activities: 1) public service agencies; 2) public facilities, 3) housing rehabilitation, and 4) historic preservation to name a few,
- SCB must always be conscious of Fair Housing legislation and look at the community to see what the barriers for the disproportionately were.
- If a CDBG funded activity would displace anyone then a similar replacement unit must be provided within 3 years, within the same area and must be made affordable for an extended period of time.
- All activities needed to procure services with Minority Business Enterprise/Women Business Enterprise, and
- Matching funds are not required for the CDBG and HOME Programs.

Ms. Safko then discussed the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) 5-year plan 2021-2025 which included:

- She reviewed the CIP presented in March of 2020 along with a draft revised plan, noting there were some changes needed and that because the Public Works Director position was vacant collaboration on the CIP was pending.

Ms. Safko shared some items that could be done to update this plan:

- 2020 - Streetlights east end of Beaver Avenue – The 2020-2021 Streetlight project was postponed to use these funds for homelessness prevention COVID-19 needs;

- 2023 - Streetlights/curb ramps on Pugh Street (Beaver Avenue to Nittany Avenue.);
- 2024 - Implement parts of the west end neighborhood to improve that area of town and;
- 2025 - more pedestrian improvements.

Ms. Safko noted Public Works staff had not had much time for discussion on these projects due to lack of staffing and many other projects in the works.

She noted there was nothing new presented, just a shifting of when these projects would move forward.

CAC comments

- Mr. Boswell noted it would be worthwhile to consider streetlight projects that would utilize softer lighting and suggested the need for the homeless population should be more important than the need for replacement streetlights.
- Mr. Olcese stated he appreciated the improvements to the streetlights, however, he agreed with Mr. Boswell the money could be better spent in helping our homeless community.

The general consensus was the topic needed further discussion. Ms. Safko stated staff/members could pull information from other peer communities to see what the SCB could model after.

Public Comment

- Mr. Huncik noted members could reach out to the RDA. He reminded members about the Sunshine Law with regard to a discussion outside of a meeting forum.

Upcoming Meeting

The next scheduled virtual meeting would be Tuesday, September 1, 2020 at Noon.

Adjournment

With no further business, Mr. Gaines made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:01 p.m. and Mr. Olcese seconded the motion. The vote was unanimously in favor.

Respectfully submitted,

Denise L. Rhoads
Administrative Assistant