

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT – SMALL CITIES PROGRAM

PUBLIC HEARING MINUTES

Staff from the Office of Community Development conducted the requisite public hearing for the 2016 Small Cities application at the scheduled time for the Enfield Revitalization Strategy Committee on Thursday, March 24, 2016. The public hearing was opened at 7:08 PM.

Present: Scott Bertrand, Enfield Housing Authority (EHA), Steve Cogtella

Staff: Jim Hallisey, Project Manager, and Dawn Hunt, Community Development Accounting Clerk

Jim Hallisey, Project Manager for the Office of Community Development, read the public notice into the record, and then presented a brief overview of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program, along with some of the previous projects completed utilizing CDBG funds. He noted that the CDBG program was promulgated by the Housing and Community Development Act of 1968, which provides funds to communities for a variety of activities. He noted that cities of 50,000 and over receive funding based on a formula. Communities with less than 50,000 (some exceptions) compete for about \$11,000,000 in Small Cities funds. Communities must submit an application for a single activity, and the funding limits under the Small Cities Program by category are \$300,000 for Housing Rehabilitation, \$500,000 for Infrastructure (streets and sidewalks), \$300,000 for Economic Development, \$25,000 for Planning \$500,000 for Public Housing improvements, and \$ 500,000 for Public Facilities.

Jim Hallisey noted that Towns are required to hold a public hearing seeking input on Small Cities applications. Towns are also required to propose a specific activity. The Office of Community Development is proposing to apply for \$500,000 for Public Housing Modernization, with the Enfield Housing Authority contributing an additional \$290,000 to the project. The project would include replacing siding, windows and entry doors at the Green Valley and Laurel Park public housing complexes, as the current vinyl siding that encapsulates leaded wood siding is failing.

Scott Bertrand of EHA provided background on the housing complexes, which were built in 1951 and 1954 respectively, and contain 18 buildings with 36 units. He also explained some of the qualifications for utilizing the public housing program, which is run without any subsidies. EHA provides a moderate rental program, where applicants must demonstrate they can pay the base rent, which is based on their income with a minimum that varies by number of bedrooms in the requested unit. Mr. Bertrand stated that residents are required to do their own lawn maintenance and snow removal, which helps to keep

rents low. As tenants' income goes up, so does their rent, and at a certain income threshold there is an additional surcharge. This structure provides incentive and means for tenants to transition to market rate rentals or home ownership. Mr. Bertrand stated that contrary to stereotypical perception, 85% of the resident households in this program have some if not all of their income from gainful employment.

As proposed, this Public Housing Modernization project will not generate any program income.

There was a general consensus of support among those present.

The public hearing was closed at 7:35 PM.