

**November 5, 2015 Vermont Community Development Board
National Life Deane Davis Building, 6th Floor (Calvin Coolidge Room)**

Members in attendance in person – Cynthia Gubb, Angus Chaney, Bruce MacLean, Sarah Carpenter, Kenneth Niemczyk, and David Scherr

Staff in attendance – Noelle MacKay, Josh Hanford, Carl Bohlen, Nathan Cleveland, Claire Forbes, Ann Kroll, Maria Davies, Tamera Pariseau, Fred Kenney, Laura Trieschmann, Wendy Tudor, and Cindy Blondin

Cynthia Gubb, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m.

There were no members of the public in attendance for Public Comment. Cynthia directs the Board to the first application.

Town of Waltham – McKnight Lane

Claire Forbes presented an overview of the Waltham application requesting \$498,000 in VCDP funds and issues that were raised in the analysis. The Town would offer a deferred loan to limited partnership Addison County Community Trust (ACCT)) to redevelop a blighted mobile home park with 14 duplex style Vermod Rental Homes (high performance, net zero energy units)

The following individuals came before the board to present on behalf of the Town of Waltham's application: Terrance Evarado, Waltham Planning Commission Chair; Cynthia Reid, Cathedral Square; Jeffery D. Kantor, J.D. Kantor Inc.; Peter Schneider, Efficiency Vermont; Elise Shanbacker, ACCT and Robert Clark, Phelps Engineering.

Questions raised by the board and discussed with the applicant: Ken asked if the development met the zoning regulations and if they had a condition in hand. He also asked the distance from the road way to the end of the existing sidewalk. Sarah asked if they were all built for universal design and are visit-able, which is a requirement of the Tax Credit funding. She also asked if they looked at stick built as an option. Angus questioned if they needed full occupancy by the end of 2016 to get the tax credits and if they know if Vermonters want this type of housing. Bruce asked what the Town's population was and if their residents would have priority for these homes. He also was amazed with the roof's slope, how snow wouldn't be an issue. Angus asked about the projected amount of kilowatts produced with the solar panel for each unit.

Claire asked if the award conditions were acceptable and Cindy Reid and Jeff Kantor said they were comfortable with the conditions.

Town of Hartford – Bridge and Main Street Housing

Nathan Cleveland presented an overview of the Hartford application requesting \$360,000 in VCDP funds and issues he raised in his analysis. The Town would subgrant to Bridge and Main Housing LP to acquire a vacant lot on 27 North Main Street in White River Junction, the Town of Hartford's downtown. The construction will be a mixed use building, including 17 units of housing, 16 of which will be affordable housing.

The following individuals came before the board to present on behalf of the Town of Hartford's application: Lori Hirshfield, Town of Harford; Richard Williams, Vermont State Housing Authority; and Bill Bittinger, Rail Road Row LLC.

Questions raised by the board and discussed with the applicant: Ken asked about the condominium ownership structure for the residential and commercial space. He also asked about the easement with the railroad. Angus mentioned that VASH vouchers, if approved by congress, would be available for the project. Sarah noted the MOU could allow preference for 2 – 4 units for veterans. Cynthia asked about handicapped parking.

Angus asked if the award conditions were acceptable and Lori Hirshfield and Bill Bittinger said yes.

Town of Brattleboro –

Nathan presented an overview of Brattleboro's application requesting \$1,000,000 in VCDP funds and issues raised in the analysis. The Town would subgrant the funds to the Brattleboro Development Credit Corporation (BDCC) to assist with the acquisition and expansion of buildings and infrastructure at the Exit One Industrial Park to support the expansion of GS Precision that will result in the creation of 100 new jobs in Brattleboro.

The following individuals came before the board to present on behalf of the Town of Brattleboro's application: Patrick Moreland, Town of Brattleboro; John Hanley, GS Precision; and Adam Grinold and Robert Stevens, BDCC.

Questions raised by the board and discussed with the applicant: Bruce asked how long employee training takes. He also asked what the advantages were between their Brattleboro and Mexico facilities. Cynthia asked how many employees they have at the NH facility. She also questioned what benefits GSP offer their employees. She then asked where they were in the permitting process. Ken asked about the availability of additional parking. Sarah asked how far along they were on the new market tax credits application. Angus asked about the duration of their current contract with GE. He also asked if their line was adaptable to retool.

Cynthia asked if the award conditions were acceptable and Patrick Moreland said yes.

Town of Barre – Montessori School of Central Vermont

Carl Bohlen presented an overview of Barre's application requesting \$195,901 in VCDP funds and issues he raised in his analysis. The Town plans to subgrant funds to the Montessori School of Central Vermont, Inc. (MSCVT) to assist with the retrofit of the former Knights of Columbus building to serve as the organization's new and permanent home. VCDP grant funds would be restricted to accessibility modifications to the building. MSCVT offers toddler care, Pre-K, kindergarten and elementary school education and the new facility allows projected enrollment to grow to 90 children in 2016 from the current 54 children.

The following individuals came before the board to present on behalf of the Town of Barre's application: Julie Bond and Kristen Martin, Montessori School of Central Vermont; Jill Pruitt and Nicholas Mortimer, parents of children at MSCVT and Chris Violette, Town of Barre.

Questions raised by the board and discussed with the applicant: Sarah asked if their appraisal had been updated and if there has been any discussion about subdividing the property. Cynthia asked about their capital campaign fundraising efforts. Bruce asked about their hours of operation. Cynthia asked about the low and moderate income (LMI) benefit. Sarah asked if their operation budget was built for serving 51% LMI. She also asked if they would be prioritizing slots for LMI children. She asked if they have been working with any affordable housing groups. Bruce asked if there has been any monitoring of the children from the MSCVT teaching environment transitioning into traditional education.

Cynthia asked if the award conditions were acceptable and Chris Violette and Julie Bond said yes.

CDBG Consent Agenda

Angus moved to fund and approve the consent agenda to approve the planning grants recommended for funding, which includes the following:

- \$30,000 CDBG – Planning Grant - Town of Brattleboro – Groundworks Housing Support Center
- \$20,000 CDBG – Planning Grant – Town of Salisbury – Town Hall Feasibility Study
- \$30,000 CDBG – Planning Grant – City of Vergennes – Vergennes Children Center

Ken seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Ken moved to not fund the City of Rutland – Vermont Farmers Food Venture Expansion project. Bruce seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

CDBG Recommendations

Angus moved to fund the Town of Waltham a \$498,000 implementation grant for McKnight Lane project with the condition they demonstrate efforts made by the Town to work with the City of Vergennes for sidewalks or pathways. Bruce seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Ken moved to fund the Town of Hartford a \$360,000 implementation grant for the Bridge and Main Street Housing project out of the FY2016 CDBG Budget. Angus seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Bruce moved to fund the Town of Brattleboro a \$900,000 implementation grant for the GS Precision project. Ken seconded the motion. The board voted – 1 opposed (Angus), 5 yes. The motion carried.

Ken moved to fund the Town of Barre a \$150,000 implementation grant to subgrant to the Montessori School of Central Vermont. David seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Town of Cambridge – Flood Resiliency Project

Carl Bohlen presented an overview of the Cambridge application requesting \$329,192 in VCDP Disaster Recovery funds and issues he raised in his analysis. The funding would be used to

replace the Cambridge Greenway/Railroad Bridge that, due to its current configuration, constricts the Brewster River's natural flow. In addition, two under-sized culverts under Route 15 would be replaced with larger ones. Both culverts and bridge projects seek to reduce flood levels within Jeffersonville Village, which would in turn prevent the flooding of an affordable housing development owned by Lamoille Housing Partnership. There was some discussion about timing as the bridge project needs to be completed by June 30, 2017.

Waitsfield United Church of Christ CC) – Meeting House Project

Carl presented an overview of the WUCC application requesting \$640,000 in VCDP Disaster Recovery funds and issues he raised in his analysis. The funding would be used to address critical building needs, including flood proofing. The main asset to the town for this urgent need project is a community meeting place. The Board noted that they had recently funded a project in the town that included a community meeting place. There were also concerns: this a large request for so few benefitting; benefit would require continued public use; not low/moderate income eligible; in the floodplain; no jobs/services benefit.

Town of Waterbury – Home Elevation Planning

Carl presented an overview of the Waterbury application requesting \$53,300 in VCDP Disaster Recovery funds and issues he raised in his analysis. In this pilot project, these late-1800 era homes in the historic district were selected for their vulnerability to flood again. The funds would be used to hire an architect to evaluate the historic and archeological aspect of the properties along with architectural renderings and for legal work involved.

CDBG-DR Recommendations

Bruce moved to fund the Town of Cambridge \$329,192 implementation grant for the flood resiliency project and the Town of Waterbury a \$53,300 planning grant for the home elevation planning project and not to fund the Waitsfield United Church of Christ project. Angus seconded the motion. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Angus moved to approve the September 17, 2015 CD Board Meeting minutes. Bruce seconded. The board voted – all voted yes. The motion carried.

Updates

Noelle expressed appreciation to the Board for their professionalism and thoughtful work. Cynthia approved of the visual presentations at today's meeting. Bruce expressed appreciation for September's Tour of Disaster Recovery projects in Central Vermont. Cynthia offered congratulations to Josh on his appointment as Deputy Commissioner of Dept. of Housing & Community Development.

The next Board meeting will be on Thursday, February 11, 2016. Board meeting dates are posted on our website.

Adjourn

Cynthia adjourned the meeting at 3:00.