

CITY OF DOVER

DOVER PLANNING BOARD WORKSHOP- MINUTES

Meeting Type: Regular Meeting
Meeting Location: Council Chambers – 288 Central Avenue, Dover, NH 03820
Meeting Date: Tuesday, March 11, 2008
Meeting Time: 6:00 pm

REGULAR MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Cole, Marcia Colbath, Dean, Dean Trefethen, Doug Steele, Donald Andolina, Tony McManus, Frank Torr, John Swartzendruber

REGULAR MEMBERS ABSENT: Perry Plummer

ALTERNATE MEMBERS PRESENT: Ron Stock, Kirt Schuman, Linda Merullo

STAFF PRESENT: Christopher Parker, Planning Director; Rick Jones, Community Development Coordinator and Jacqueline Pease Recording Secretary

Chairman Ron Cole opened the workshop on the CDBG applications at 6:05 p.m.

Kirt Schuman sat in Perry Plummer's seat.

Rick Jones, Community Development Coordinator, stated it is Year Four of the Consolidated Plan. He explained how they rank the activities that are eligible by High, Medium or Low. There are always more requests than money available. They have a lot of requests and the public service agency cap is at 15% of the grant amount, plus program income from the previous year. They received \$149,297 in requests and only \$66,369 can be give out, which is a cut of \$80,000. All the agencies are great agencies and do a good job for the City of Dover. There just is not enough money to fund them all. Part of the reason that the Red Cross has not been funded is it was noted that they send part of the money they receive to the national corporation. The only other agency that was not recommended for funding was The HUB and that is because they are being funded under Public Facilities for \$14,453 for improvements at their 23 Atkinson St. building. The building was bought and renovated with CDBG funds. They are looking at providing them with funding on only one side of the grant.

Chris Parker explained that two years ago there was a situation where the Dover Children's Center put in for funds from both sides. At that time, the Board advocated funding one and not both in order to spread the limited funds around. They used that policy statement in making their decision.

Rick Jones explained that money was allocated to the School Dept. last year and they realized that one of the stair lifts would not work in the planned location due to the amount of traffic that was going up and down the hall. Putting that lift in would make a lot of kids late for class. They dropped down to one stair elevator in the new wing of the building. They are reprogramming \$23,000 of their grant to this grant cycle. They gave them a 10% contingency on the bid so they are looking at a potential of \$4,262 being left over. Rather than letting the money sit there, his proposal is to take that money to increase Easter Seals' amount.

Don Andolina asked if it was possible to carry over money from one year to another.



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Rick Jones stated that nothing can be carried over under the Public Service end. The bottom section Administration, Rehabilitation, Public Facilities and Economic Development, can be carried over.

Donald Andolina asked if there was money in hand if it would earn interest.

Rick Jones answered no. They have to spend the money within three days of receiving it. The City receives interest in the loan pools but it has to be sent back to the treasury.

Don Andolina asked for an explanation of the criteria used to develop the recommendations.

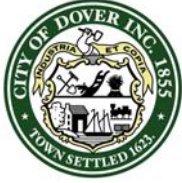
Rick Jones used the Homeless Center for Strafford County as an example of a high priority. He explained that if they were to close, clients would come to City Welfare and Janet Poulin would have to put those people up in hotels, which would cost the City a lot of money.

Chris Parker asked the Board to keep in mind that everything is looked at from the affect side and the request side. A lot of the agencies, if they didn't receive funding, their clientele would end up coming to the City's Human Services Office. They try to mitigate what would be the affect on the tax rate by increasing the grant amount. The clientele served and the tract record is looked at. Rick Jones has a monitoring program.

Ron Cole said unless a good reason can be given why not, he would like to switch \$5,000 from the \$9,300 that is being allocated to AIDS and give it to The HUB Family Service. His primary reason for doing it is because the Board gave AIDS \$4,150 last year and we, potentially, are going to give them \$9,300 this year. There were 20 Dover residents served by AIDS last year and The HUB served 846.

Rick Jones explained that the priority rating for AIDS Response is a high priority and the HUB is a medium priority.

Dean Trefethen felt, for next year, the Board should concentrate the funds on development of facilities or programs, rather than ongoing operations. He thought most of these agencies should be looking elsewhere for their funding to do their ongoing work. Some day the money will go away completely so it would be good for them to become independent. He felt that some agencies that were given money in the last couple of years may not still be valid. He said for example Big Brothers & Big Sisters 3 or 4 years ago were moving their office to Dover and he was the one that suggested giving them some money, but they are not based in Dover anymore. He is not sure that there is as big a reason as there was a few years ago to fund them. He isn't saying that it is not worthy. Somewhat similar things could be said about some other organizations. It may be time to say that next year you will probably get nothing because there are other agencies that are developing new programs or services that need to be funded.



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Marcia Colbath said that her understanding was that the agencies on the top of the sheet have been historically using the funds we give them for operating expenses. The bottom of the list is mostly facilities, development and rehabilitation. She doesn't have a problem with giving money to the top half but she doesn't understand the development of new programs that aren't going to have more funding. There is already too much overlap in services to the point of wasting money. She said that she is very ok with people using money to help Dover citizens and helping as many as possible. In a sense, she agrees with Ron on moving the \$5,000 to The HUB. A lot of these organizations receive funds from a lot of different places and those medical based programs such as AIDS Response, must receive a lot of funds from a lot of different places and that is why she doesn't have a problem with moving that money to The HUB.

Kirt Schuman asked why Easter Seals is asking for kitchen facilities in the McConnell Center. He thought that there was a central kitchen facility in the building.

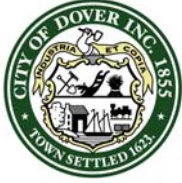
Chris Parker stated that they will have to talk to them about that. He said that any kitchen apparatus they want to put in will be somewhat of an issue because of the venting. The Senior Center has a kitchen and it cost \$25,000 to vent. They would encourage working with the Green Bean Café and utilizing the central kitchen. That's what the day care has done and that is what they hope Easter Seals will do. In reality, they requested \$230,000 and we are looking at \$180,000 and they may get an additional \$4,000. They are in the stage of negotiating the lease and the process.

Frank Torr felt that the Easter Seals Adult Day Care services seem to be the same services that are offered by the Homemakers. He asked if there was a demand for such a service.

Chris Parker said that Easter Seals' plan is a day out facility, whereas Homemakers come to your house with activities within your house. This is an opportunity for people who have live-in parents to drop them off on their way to work. He said that it gives them opportunities that they would not get at home. They would utilize programs in conjunction with the Senior Center. The idea is to bring in an adult day care that will offer the same type of opportunity as a child day care, but for older citizens that can't be home alone. This is not a medical or rehab scenario. Chris Parker said that the service would be tuition or service based. Easter Seals has an outpatient facility in the building and it will operate similarly.

Tony McManus felt that Planning did a very good job with the limited funds to decide who is deserving of the funds. He might have a quibble about \$1,000 one way or another. In response to Dean's comments, if we were giving these people a lot of money per year he might have some concern if it is just going for operating expenses, but we are not giving them much. He said he did the math with regard to Big Brothers & Big Sisters and we are giving them \$17.00 per child that they helped last year. He said that a lot of these agencies are facing cuts from state and federal programs and they are really up against it.

Donald Andolina said that he supports what Tony said. He said that he is contented with the allocation.



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Linda Merullo stated that Rick Jones has done a great job and the Board should trust his judgment. She would recommend it as is.

Ron Cole stated that he agrees but he would like to see \$5,000 for The HUB. He said that the Board has fostered that program for 9 or 10 years. The City gave them seed money and they grew and grew and have done a good job of educating parents on how to raise children. These are mostly people who have been two or three generations of not really knowing what to do. These people need help so he feels very strongly about the \$5,000. You are looking at 20 Dover people for AIDS Response vs. 846 for the HUB.

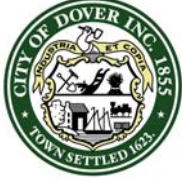
The workshop was closed.

Ron Cole asked if anyone was opposed to moving the \$5,000. Tony McManus and Frank Torr stated they were opposed. He said that the vote on the CDBG funds will be taken at the regular meeting at 7:00 pm.

Master Plan

Chris Parker introduced Norm Fracassa as the consultant that the City is hiring to update the Recreation Master Plan.

Norm Fracassa, Design Works, which is a landscape architecture and consulting service company. He stated that he will be working on the Recreation Chapter of the Master Plan. He has experience in community planning and construction and maintenance. In 2007 he was part of the volunteer committee of the Land Use Chapter of the Master Plan that was completed. He volunteered in the Main Street Program and co-designed Tuttle Park. Until recently he was part of the Cocheco Waterfront Committee. He will do an inventory and site analysis of the City's parks and then prioritize what is needed. He will look at the facilities and ball parks. He said that he will update a document put together by Strafford Regional Planning and the City, called "Recreation in Dover". The goal is to update this document which will make it more user friendly but also in a format that can be on the City's website with links. He will do an inventory and site analysis of the parks and ball fields and will make recommendations. He will prioritize what is needed so when there is money the City can see what is needed and put it out to bid. He will put together an action plan. He said that recreation and landscaping are the first things that get cut. He will do his best to communicate the passion and philosophy on how parks relate to the quality of life for the people who live here. He will develop a volunteer committee. He has met with different committees and getting input from them. He will develop a survey which will be on paper, the website and possibly e-mail form to get input from the people. They will also go into the neighborhoods and communicate with the people who live there. The project should be completed in early July.



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Donald Andolina asked if he would identify utilization of each of the parks which would be very meaningful.

Norm Fracassa stated they would look at the proximity of the parks to the neighborhood. Are people walking to these parks? He said that they may want to consolidate some of the equipment on a larger piece of land where there could be more apparatus and benches.

Dean Trefethen asked how his work differs from a Master Plan study that was done not that long ago.

Chris Parker said that the Maglaras Master Plan is more specific to just that park. He would take the 2000 Recreation Master Plan and recognize that since that time, the Maglaras Park Plan has been done and incorporate that in the narrative. Not to redo it, but to incorporate it. He's not looking for Norm to redo that Master Plan over but he thinks that that document needs to be evaluated on its own. One of the things that he hopes to see out of this document is to have, as part of the prioritization and action plan, the ability when the Planning Board receives money for offsite recreation improvements, the document will find where the money can be targeted. Also, when the Recreation Department is putting together their request for the CIP, they can lean on this document and see where they need to put it. It will tell them where the needs and the priorities are.

Kirt Schuman asked if the work that Norm does could either end up validating some of the Maglaras Plan, or say if a plan calls for 16 basket ball courts, Norm would be able to see if there were courts that were underutilized.

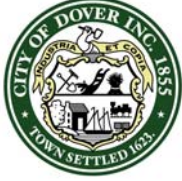
Chris Parker said that Norm could be looking at standards where it would say one basketball court for every 5,000 people. Part of the survey work is to determine how much activity the citizenry wants.

Ron Cole stated that his completely uneducated assumption that over the next 6 months to a year, we will run into a crisis in numerous City departments put upon us by the recent votes. Use the phrase Quality of Life because the quality of life is why people are happy in a community and move to a community. The quality of life is exactly what recreation is all about.

Norm Fracassa said that they could conduct it like "Speak Out Dover" where groups could be sent out in the community to gather public input. There are a number of ways that it can be done.

Kirt Schuman thinks that the update presents a very unique opportunity. Obviously, users of recreation in this City are of various ages. He asked if he was intending to reach out to all users of parks, speaking to the actual children that might be using the equipment as well as their parents. That could present a unique perspective.

Norm Fracassa said that they will talk to the parents and why not interview the kids as well.



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Ron Stock asked if the things that are not classified as a park, such as open lands or recreation areas that have easements on them, would be included in this plan.

Norm Fracassa said that they have to draw the line someplace. How do you define a park? Is the playground at Horne St. School considered a park or is it part of the School System. They will be looking at differentiating a park.

Chris Parker said that they will look at open space that has a public access component. One of the things that were talked about is that he wanted to take the Open Space and Recreation and separate them. They also want to do an update on the Open Space and Conservation Chapter. Kirt Schuman was on the committee of the community trail. Is the community trail a transportation or a recreation facility? In reality, it straddles both. He thinks that is the type of thing that Norm will help with.

Norm Fracassa said that they will be looking at the proximity of where these parks already exist and identifying some possibilities for the future so in ten years from now they don't have to start from square one. Primarily, they will do an inventory of areas like Shaws Lane, Maglaras Park, and the Cocheco Waterfront Redevelopment and there is the Joe Parks Riverwalk. He hopes to shed some light on the parks system. How much do people know what the City actually has in Dover? We say it is underutilized but why is it underutilized. He said that having links on a website, and photographs are a couple more things that he will be doing in the process of promoting the parks.

Ron Cole volunteered to be the Planning Board representative.

Workshop closed at 6:55 pm.