



APPROVED
MINUTES
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION MEETING
Tuesday, February 28, 2023, City Council Chambers
400 South Vine Street, Urbana, IL 61801

Call to Order: At 6:00 p.m., Chairperson Anne Heinze-Silvis called the meeting to order.

Roll Call: The roll was called by Grants Management Division Manager, Sheila Dodd. A quorum was in place.

Commission Members Present: Anne Heinze-Silvis, Chris Diana, DeShawn Williams, and Patricia Jones

Commission Members Excused/Absent: Rev. Robert Freeman,

Others Present: Sheila Dodd, Grants Management Division Manager; Lily Wilcock, Planner II; Andrea Ruedi, Senior Advisor on Integrated Strategy Development; Hillary Ortiz, Office Specialist

Approval of Minutes: A motion to approve the minutes for the January 24, 2023 meeting was made by Commissioner Jones. Commissioner Diana seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

Petitions and Communications: There were no Petitions or Communications to discuss.

Audience Participation: No one stepped forward to provide comments. Public comments were not received via mail or email either.

Staff Report: Mrs. Dodd provided a brief update regarding the Housing and Homelessness Innovation Grant programs that were approved by Council in January. She stated that the City of Champaign and the City of Urbana selected 5 programs to fund. The selected programs were:

1. Champaign County Regional Planning Commission – Housing Navigation Program
2. Champaign County Health Care Consumers – Special Populations Case Management
3. C-U at Home – Housing Navigation Program
4. Cunningham Township Supervisor’s Office – Bridge to Home Program
5. Northpoint Development – Prairie Ridge Apartments

Mrs. Dodd mentioned that the two cities had a cumulative total of just under 5 million dollars to fund the HHI grants, and the selected 5 programs will only utilize half of the overall amount. The cities plan to open up a second round of HHI applications, once the first round of agreements has been executed, to fund additional programs with the remaining balance.

Mrs. Dodd told the commissioners that the City's Draft Annual Action Plan for the FY 2023-2023 will be made available to the public on Wednesday, March 1st. She noted that the City's CAPER was recently approved, and the official CDBG and HOME funding balances have been noted in the Draft Annual Action Plan.

Mrs. Dodd announced that the City would like to update the funding limits for the rehabilitation grants that are listed in the Housing Program Manual. She provided the commissioners with a general overview of the proposed changes and then directed them to the specific pages on which the changes were made. Mrs. Dodd stated that the City would like to raise the maximum funding limits of the aforementioned Grants so that the City can provide a higher level of assistance to income-qualified households in need of rehabilitation repairs. Mrs. Dodd also noted that raising the funding limits for these programs would also help combat recent inflation costs that our economy has experienced over the past couple of years. The proposed grant adjustments are:

1. Accessibility Grant's new maximum funding limit would be raised to \$10,000
2. Emergency Repair Grant's new maximum funding limit would be raised to \$10,000
3. Roof and Sewer Repair Grant's maximum funding limit would be raised to \$15,000

A motion to approve the changes made to the Housing Program Manual and the associated funding limits was made by Commissioner Diana. Commissioner Jones seconded the motion. A voice vote was called and a motion in favor of the change carried unanimously.

Ms. Wilcock and Mrs. Ruedi gave a presentation on the City's new "Imagine Urbana" website. Ms. Wilcock stated that the Imagine Urbana website is the City's solution to providing community members with a user-friendly, accessible, and fun way to learn about the upcoming Comprehensive Plan. She explained, that in previous years, the City's Comprehensive Plan was made available to the public by way of an over 400-page document. The City did not view this as a very enticing way to get community members excited about the plan. City staff is hoping that, by presenting the Comprehensive Plan in this way, more community members will become involved in the planning process, and a larger pool of input and feedback will be received.

Ms. Wilcock noted that one of the most exciting features built into the website is an interactive exercise that provides community members with an allotted "budget" and asks them to "spend" that money toward fixing specific community issues that the person deems most important. This exercise is meant to not only give the community a chance to see how the City is planning to address specific issues within the community but also provides each person with an opportunity to share his/her opinions on how they would most like to see the City's funds spent.

Ms. Wilcock continued her presentation by giving a quick run-through of the website's overall contents. She informed the commissioners that the Imagine Urbana page is broken down into five "chapters" (transportation; arts and culture; housing; energy and environment; and health and safety), each of which addresses a specific topic covered in the Comprehensive Plan. Ms. Wilcock noted, that for this meeting, the primary focus would be on walking the commissioners through the chapter entitled "Housing". Included in the "Housing" chapter, Ms. Wilcock shared information regarding the historical housing trends in Urbana, local data set results demonstrating Urbana's current housing trends, and descriptions/examples of how each City department is working towards addressing housing needs within the community. Ms. Wilcock noted that, currently, the Imagine Urbana website is still under construction, but a draft version of the site would be available for the commissioners to view within two weeks. She explained that City Staff would like the commissioners to review the Housing chapter of the website, and provide their

feedback on the content and the site's overall usability before it is brought before the Plan Commission, for their approval, on April 6, 2023. A discussion was then had regarding what the commissioner's initial thoughts on the website were, what specific items the commissioners were being asked to provide input on, and any overall questions or concerns that the commissioners had thus far were addressed.

Old Business: There was no Old Business to discuss.

New Business: There was no New Business to discuss.

Study Session: There were no Study Session items to discuss.

Adjournment: At 6:50 p.m., Chairperson Anne Heinze-Silvis adjourned the meeting.

Recorded by

Hillary L. Ortiz
Office Specialist