

# City of Dunkirk

## Economic Development Committee Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, December 18, 2012  
11:15 am, Conference Room in City Hall

Attendees: Bill Rivera, Councilman  
Stephanie Kiyak, Council Member-At-Large  
Steve Neratko, Director of Planning and Development  
Tim Gornikiewicz, CDBG Administrator, Planning and Development Department  
Nicole Waite, Planning and Development Department  
AJ Dolce, Mayor  
Ron Szot, City Attorney  
Stacy Szukala, Councilwoman  
Samantha McDonnell, Observer Reporter

Absent: Andy Gonzalez, Councilman

*Call to Order:* 11:18 am

*Approval Of Last Meeting Minutes:*

Meeting minutes for November's meeting were not approved since the Board did not have a quorum.

*Issues Discussed:*

**Façade Grant:** Steve provided an overview of the program. Tim is waiting to hear from businesses that still need to provide follow-up information required by HUD. S. Kiyak questioned the procedure of dispensing money to a recipient prior to ensuring that all necessary follow-up documentation has been gathered. Steve informed the board that some follow-up is required several months to several years after final disbursements so there always remains the possibility of unforeseen difficulty in ensuring complete documentation required by HUD, and suggested that going forward recipients would be provided a checklist of required documentation they would need to supply or else be out of compliance with the terms and be forced to return grant monies. It was agreed that this will be one of the new procedures put into place – checklists, guidelines and agreements that are clear, concise, and follow all HUD rules and regulations. Steve also pointed out that future disbursements would be for larger amounts but less recipients – perhaps even only one recipient. He warned the Board that CDBG funding for 2013 might be cut as much as 25% (due to the “Fiscal Cliff” occurring at the federal level). Tim promised to go out and take pictures of the

completed façade projects in the next day or two. Steve mentioned that HUD requires before and after pictures, and that we can also utilize Google street view. Tim pointed out that Rookies, Dunkirk Pediatrics, Medicare and other recipients increased employment, meeting at least one of HUD's National Objectives. Steve mentioned that going forward the façade program should focus more on signage than on job development (to meet HUD requirements). It was questioned if this façade program was part of the 2012 Action Plan and Steve clarified that that it was. He further clarified that this particular program (and the monies recently disbursed) are being handled under the DLDC, not the City. He stated that HUD suggested that the City not participate in the Façade Program in the 1-year plan (2013), but can resume the program in the 5-year plan. Steve pointed out that HUD does not recommend that the City manage the façade program but rather use a subrecipient (such as the DLDC).

**CDBG Update:** Tim was questioned by S. Kiyak about the bids for the sidewalk repairs and asked him if he received copies of the bids from DPW. Tim said that state law allows work to be done without bids if the amount is under \$20,000; however, Steve pointed out that HUD requires bids, regardless of the amount. Apparently Tony Gugino, Director of Public Works, was unaware of this exception to the rule. Steve said that HUD will have an issue with this, and Tim said that Harry Sicherman is looking into this issue further on our behalf. HUD guidelines call for either an RFP, or procuring three estimates. It was discussed that procuring estimates limits who may be interested in providing services and that going forward the procedure established should be that RFP's are used for all future CDBG projects undertaken by the City. It was noted that RFP's cost money to publish in the paper (perhaps as much as \$200) but it was also noted that this amount can be deducted from the project. It was suggested that rather than spend \$\$ on separate RFP's throughout the year that all projects be consolidated into one RFP package and advertised together. Interested parties would also have access to the specs for whatever project they are interested in. It was decided that all future projects require an RFP and that procuring three estimates would not be an option. Steve will follow-up with a formal memo to Tony Gugino in DPW stating the new requirements of the CDBG program.

A handout was provided of all applications received for 2013 CDBG. Steve mentioned that there were less applications than anticipated. Discussion surrounded who submitted and the requested amounts. Steve pointed out that it's up to the City to approve the recipients and amounts, and how funding would be determined. Steve informed the group that during public hearings, funding to address housing did not appear to be the biggest issue, but rather job creation and education was cited more often. A challenge in housing rehabilitation is that it takes an interested organization to join the city in order to participate in the program, and that Chautauqua Works and Chautauqua Opportunities (being two such organizations) did not apply. Steve pointed out that regardless of the vision of the City, CDBG funding relies on these participating organizations and if there is no interest, then it cannot go forward. Individuals within the community cannot apply for the funds – application must come from an organization willing to take on the project. It was questioned that if money isn't spent if it can be reallocated or carried over to next year, and Steve informed the group that if the money isn't spent we lose it – it cannot be applied to the following year without being formally designated. It was questioned what the first step would be since all applications are now in. Steve, Tim and AJ will review the applications, request further information from the applicants (if necessary), and then decide which projects would be best to fund. It was requested by Steve to have the economic committee meet on January 2, 2013 so that we can discuss the 1-year action plan in more detail prior to the council meeting held the same day, in order to provide a 30-day window for public notice prior to submission to HUD in February 2013. A handout was provided that describes all HUD CDBG programs available and how these programs meet the national objective. Steve pointed out that City departments do

not need to fill out an application but rather the information is provided to HUD, in detail, when the City submits its 1-year action plan to HUD. It was discussed that details must be included in both the 1-year and the 5-year action plan (i.e., any street work needs details to include the street name/location, and type of work that will be done). Although the plan needs details, it is still flexible and can be changed. Steve mentioned that the City should focus mainly on infrastructure in the future, and said he would be meeting with Tony Gugino of DPW this week to further discuss details for the 1-year and 5-year plans that will be submitted to HUD in February. Bill inquired about whether unallocated funds can be reallocated to infrastructure projects and Steve said that yes, they can be in the 5-year plan. As part of the 5-year plan HUD also looks for rough percentages of how the money will be allocated (and there are limits to the percentage allocated). The possibilities of how money can be allocated in the various areas (demolition, administration costs, zoning, etc.) was further discussed. April 1, 2013 through March 31, 2014 is considered the fiscal year for funding. Monies that will be disbursed for 2013 won't be received by the City until May or June 2013. The possibility for GIS mapping was brought up and if it could fall within a CDBG program for funding. Steve believed that it could fall within a category. Steve promised to look into what would be most cost-effective for the City – procuring GIS software or utilizing a third-party, such as SUNY Fredonia or The Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board.

**Boardwalk Update:** Two tenants are currently past due for the month of December. Steve informed the board that letters will be sent out by the City Attorney via certified mail. Two leases will be coming up for renewal in the Spring (March 31<sup>st</sup> and April 30<sup>th</sup>); however one may have a renewal clause. :

**Festivals Committee:** The group had its first formal meeting and appointed various positions. Next meeting will be January 10, 2013. The public is invited to attend.

### *New Business*

It was discussed that the next step to follow-up with the Amtrack station project would be a feasibility study. Steve knows David Rankin over at SUNY and said that he would reach out and see if his class may be able to do a study on behalf of the City.

### *Adjournment*

The meeting was adjourned at 12:32 pm.