

City of Dunkirk

Economic Development Committee Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 6, 2013
11:00 am, Conference Room in City Hall

- Attendees: Stephanie Kiyak, Council Member-At-Large, Board Chair
Andy Gonzalez, Councilman, Board Member
Steve Neratko, Director of Planning and Development
Tim Gornikiewicz, CDBG Administrator, Planning and Development Department
Nicole Waite, Planning and Development Department
Richard Halas FAO
Ron Szot, City Attorney
Gib Snyder, Observer Reporter
- Guests: Janet Forbes, Coordinator, Chautauqua County Health Network -- Creating Healthy Places
Andy Dickson, Built Environment Contractor
- Kathy Tampio, Chair, Chadwick Bay Regional Development Group
Dan Schranz, Town of Portland
Eric Weis, Clark, Patterson & Lee
- Absent: Bill Rivera, Councilman, Board Member

Call to Order:

11:00 am

Approval of Last Meeting Minutes:

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

Presentations:

Janet Forbes, Coordinator, Chautauqua County Health Network, Creating Healthy Places spoke to the group about her organization's 5-year grant (expires Fall 2015). Main goal of the grant is primary prevention of chronic disease by providing education about choosing healthy foods and living a more active lifestyle, with the goal of lessening the healthcare burden. The first couple of years have focused on Jamestown, and now

they want to begin work here in Dunkirk starting in April 2013. The organization works with the Chautauqua County Health Network (made up of hospitals throughout the county) and she provided a list of current partners (attached). The initiative in Jamestown involves three community gardens in cooperation with the Jamestown Renaissance Corporation (a non-profit), and they also worked on advocating for a "Complete Streets" ordinance (NY State passed an ordinance a year and a half ago, and Jamestown has also passed such an ordinance). The purpose is to design streets that are safe, comfortable and convenient for all users, not just vehicles, and they are hoping that the City of Dunkirk will pass a similar ordinance. Janet talked about working with the farmer's market in Jamestown, and she's also met with Greg Krauser of the Chautauqua County Chamber of Commerce last week on behalf of Dunkirk's farmers market. Farm to School is another initiative in Jamestown as well as at the County level, which is a program focusing on providing fresh local foods to public schools. The farmer's market initiative in Jamestown is also working with the Renaissance Corp on "branding" throughout the city, and Janet also brought examples of the signs that they are currently using in Jamestown. She talked about Jamestown also donating food from the community gardens to soup kitchens, as well as providing workshops that teach how to preserve these foods. Future goals include starting a community kitchen for teaching skills, which will also benefit farmers. The group has also teamed with SUNY (Chuck Cornell) and The Center for Advancement, and they are looking to do "walkability assessments" (Chuck will have his class work on this in the 2013 fall semester). There is some money in the farmers market budget for training a farmers market manager through the Federation of Farmers Markets of New York, and the Chamber plans on sending two people for training (there is also an opening for someone from the City of Dunkirk available). She went on to tell the group that there are approximately 42 community gardens throughout Jamestown, and she offered to share the lease agreements currently being used between the City and the gardeners. She mentioned a small issue of concern that came up with the gardens was that although there was no vandalism for any of the gardens last year, there was some "harvest without permission" (but they think it was due to a confusion over the term "community garden", which can be construed as giving permission to come and take whatever you want). They also had to deal with critter damage. Overall the program was considered a big success. Plans for the next harvest include allowing people to sell what they grow and also allow composting. Their new work plan and budget will begin in April.

Kathy Tampio, Chair, Chadwick Bay Regional Development Group (the "Group") was the next speaker, coming to the committee to talk about the LGE Grant application. She provided some background regarding the Group's efforts thus far. There has been initial funding through an ARC grant of \$150,000 (with the City of Dunkirk as a co-applicant) for a regional water system throughout Chautauqua County. This grant being a 50/50 matching grant, they are looking for matching funds with help from the IDA and the Northern Chautauqua Community Foundation, as well as soliciting support from local industries (largest water users). The grant has allowed the Group to solicit an RFP for a lead consultant and they selected Clark Patterson Lee, who has compiled a synopsis of the potential of this community-wide project, which they project would reduce overall costs for all municipalities participating. As of this date, the county health department identified over \$150 million worth of improvements needed for the six participating municipalities, not including Dunkirk. The Group is now at the stage of trying to get more money for the planning stages of this regional project, which would be the primary purpose of the LGE grant. Some of their current tasks include talking with each of the municipalities and visiting their WTP plants. The current "game plan" is that the City of Dunkirk would be the main water supplier for the area based to Hanover and Town of Portland (long-term planning would include adding Westfield and Ripley). The City of Dunkirk would be the primary water provider, with a backup connection to the Erie County Water Authority (which already exists). Also being considered is a transmission line in Sheridan to provide water to Hanover and Silver Creek, and

transmission main improvements to Brockton and Portland (although lines are there they are not sized appropriately to meet the needs). Total project is estimated at \$40 million, not including the approximate \$17 million being spent by the City of Dunkirk (consent order items). The Group's next step is coming up with a number of scenarios, including the long-term goal of how the \$40 million expense should be shared with the other municipalities. Further discussion included questions about what being the "lead" would mean for the City of Dunkirk. A handout was provided regarding the Governor's announcement about this grant being due March 15, plus a sample resolution for the City to use, as well as talking points about why it's necessary for the City to be the lead. The primary reason is that since the City is the main water supplier to Sheridan, Portland, Pomfret and Fredonia, we can show funding partners in Albany that we have the ability to administer the grant. The group was assured that although Steve Neratko would be referenced as the lead contact person, most of the work would be done by Kathy, with some assistance by the Group. Quarterly reports will go through the city of Dunkirk, as well as any money being paid to the consultants. The grant is for \$400,000 with a 10% grant matching fund, and the Group believes that funding partners at the County level, along with local IDAs, will cover the 10%. It was questioned how many municipalities would be involved – there would be seven total, including the City of Dunkirk. Worse case scenario is that if the \$40,000 doesn't come through we were assured that it would be split evenly amongst the seven participating municipalities. It was pointed out that the City can decide to step away as lead applicant, even after the grant is approved, and that there is no cost to the city to apply for the grant. The grant is considered a "reimbursement grant", meaning that when bills come in they are paid. The application deadline is March 13, 2013. Kathy reiterated that this grant's purpose is to create the district – whatever that comes out to be. All the tasks involved are indicated on the handout, and this grant will cover meetings, environmental review, drafting the impact statement, drafting the master plan and financial analysis, the asset management plan, and ultimately an operational cost maintenance plan. It is estimated that \$40 million will basically be for pipes, tanks and pump stations – the infrastructure (actually \$23 million, since the \$40 million is the number including the \$17 million being spent on Consent Order Items in the City of Dunkirk). Kathy informed the committee that this grant will be used for cost estimates and concept plans, not for more studies. This next step will provide the answer to "how much will a gallon of water cost me"? Steve asked if time spent is "in kind" and Kathy said that this grant does not allow for that. The engineering firm believes that they will be able to present their report to the Group within two months. Time frame for milestones was questioned – it is estimated that it will take two months for the proposed game plan, a year for the buy-ins (which would involve community comment and environmentals), and five years for infrastructure construction.

CDBG 1-Year and 5-Year Plan(s): Packages have been provided to all council members prior to this meeting, and they will be formally submitted to HUD next Friday. These Plans were formally approved at the February 5, 2013 Common Council meeting.

HUD Form 425: FAO Richard Halas provided the committee with a copy of Form 425, which is a quarterly report provided to HUD regarding CDBG activity (attached). Rich told the group he uses this form as a "worksheet", and also to reconcile the bank statements. Although the report will be submitted quarterly, Rich told the group that he updates the information every time CDBG Administrator Tim Gornikiewicz provides him with any activity information. As far as Rich is aware, this is the only form that is his responsibility as the FAO to submit to HUD.

In-House CDBG Forms “Project Activity” and “CDBG Activity Checklist”: Tim provided the committee with two forms being used to monitor CDBG activity. The forms cover 2012 disbursements (see attached). It was questioned about the progress Tim is making on collecting outstanding information to complete the loan portfolios and he assured us that it still being gathered. The committee was also informed by Steve that the CDBG audit is currently being undertaken by J&M. It was requested by the committee that Rich be included as much as possible in meetings with J&M. Steve mentioned that Nicole is still gathering loan document information from the county and will provide that to Harry Sicherman, who is still working on gathering loan information. There is only \$3500 left to the budget allocated for Harry. It was questioned about whether Harry has resolved the expenditures on the Street Improvements with HUD and Steve said it’s still being worked on by Harry and AJ and that he (Steve) would bring us up to date at the next meeting.

Boardwalk: Yummy’s, Spike Lee and Blind Tiger are currently delinquent for the month of February. Attorney Ron Szot will be forwarding a delinquency letter to each of them.

Festivals: Steve told the group there will be two new festivals planned commemorating Memorial Day and Labor Day. Both would be held at Point Gratiot, and it will be a family-oriented, “picnic in the park” theme (no music or beer). Currently, there are plans for a Heritage Festival on September 7, 2013, featuring ethnic foods and crafts. Possible location would be along Central Avenue.

Mainstreet Grant Project: The City received the contract this week. Steve informed the committee that it needs to be authorized and returned to them and then we’ll receive a packet in the mail outlining the rules. We do know that we can spend up to \$50,000 per storefront (interior or exterior) and \$15,000 on streetscapes, and funds will be mostly utilized between the railroad tracks and Lakeshore Drive and up to the railroad tracks along Central Avenue. The process will include public hearings and informing the businesses, with a competitive process application procedure decided by a selection committee, before final disbursement of funds. Generally, funds are expended within two years.

New Business

It was suggested that a formal request be made from the Festivals Committee to the Cable Access Channel Board that they cover the upcoming festivals and provide footage to the City for the City’s website.

The IDA will be meeting sometime at the end of February. Steve mentioned that there are rumors of two or three businesses looking to come to relocate to the City (or expand).

Next meeting

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 6, 2013 at 11:00 am in the Conference Room. Meeting adjourned 12:31 pm.