

Minutes of the Public Hearing Regarding  
the CDBG Program Feasibility Grant  
April 22, 1997

Those in attendance were: Peter Martel, Benjamin Pratt, Sue McKinnon, Lucy Cook-Gregoire, Sydney Smith, Connie Kirwin, R.A. Harford, Peter Moore, Carol Smith and Bob Bernstein. (original sign-in attached.)

The meeting opened at 7:00 P.M.

It was brought to the attention of all present that this meeting had been posted in three public places: Town Hall, Antrim Post Office, Wayno's Supermarket; and published in the Monadnock Ledger.

The purpose of the meeting was announced:

- 1) to disseminate information on the CDBG Program Feasibility Grant
- 2) to obtain citizen views on community development needs
- 3) to review the town's proposed Feasibility Study Application

Peter Moore reviewed the background of the project to include the donation of the Aiken House to the Town of Antrim by James and Carol Rymes. The ensuing formation of the Aiken House Committee which has spent the last two years formulating the best possible uses for the property, the feasibility of these uses and the cost involved. The resulting findings of the Aiken House Committee was that it should be utilized for community groups.

Bob Bernstein, who is completing the application, went on to discuss how in the 1996 Town Meeting Antrim citizens voted to apply for the CDBG feasibility study grant. Since that time he has been working to prepare the application to comply with all its requirements.

Bob then continued to explain for those in attendance the application process. The grant is a federal program which is handled through the Office of State Planning. There is \$50,000 in aid available in the State for feasibility studies. Studies can be conducted for housing, public facilities or economic development. There is a cap of \$12,000 per Town per year. The applications acceptance will only indicate its feasibility as a block grant project, not its possible outcome. It was then noted again that the application from Antrim will be for \$10,500.

Bob then reviewed the ten questions that the CDBG feasibility grant application must answer.

The following was noted as each question was discussed:

1. A. Sufficient income eligible families: county statistics were reviewed and it was noted that 45% of Antrim residents fell in the moderate income level for a family of four (\$40,500).

- B. Grapevine resources: the method of using the past years experience, its current resources, tracking upcoming programs and a look at its current funding was discussed as how this would be determined for the application.
- C. Proposed pro-rated use by other groups will be listed in this section.

Explained that the application needs the SQ FT for offices used to meet the communities needs while leaving space for possible library expansion.

- 2. Reviewed question and listed planned programs by a variety of groups.
- 6. After discussing matching funds and that it was noted on the application that due to tax burden Antrim would not be supplying any, a discussion ensued as to whether, if the study grant was approved and the CDBG grant was approved, if the grant would cover all expenses. Bob explained that normally it is a mix of financing, loans and grants. He also mentioned that percents of building costs could be determined if portions are/aren't grant eligible. Also it was noted that normally the Town would contribute the value of the property.

Through the remaining review of the questions it was discussed that per the Warrant article, should the grant be approved, a study committee would be formed to include members of various existing committees as well as members from the general public.

Also discussed was that if it was found eligible, the maximum block grant is for \$350,000, which must include design, bricks and mortar and grant administration.

The budget of the survey request was reviewed to include:  
\$5500.00 for pre-design and architectural drawings  
\$3000.00 for an income survey  
\$1750.00 (up to) for grant administration and application preparaton

Types of applications were reviewed to give those in attendance a general idea of what type of competition this application would have. Normally, six applications are successful with money being awarded on a first approved basis. This was explained to inform everyone that it was possible for the application to be approved, but for a lesser amount.

Those in attendance were then encouraged to ask questions or supply comments regarding the application.

Benjamin Pratt asked if union scale wages would need to be paid

if the CDBG grant was approved; as he had prior experience with a block grant through the sewer department and had found that local contractors were unable to compete based on federal bidding requirements. Bob responded that it depends on the scale of the project, which would be answered in the feasibility study, but that everything would have to go out to bid and normally a general contractor is involved.

Peter Martel noted that he believed the study would be useful due to all the possible groups involved, as well as the Grapevine. Believes if the needs of the Library are also given consideration it will be helpful as well.

Bob reiterated that it is the intention to have a library representative on the study committee.

Peter Moore commented, as a member of the Aiken House Committee, they believed that even though the costs to the Town are minimal, that the payback to the Town would be worth the investment. Demographics show that this type of community would benefit from such a community center. Even though the Grapevine is only one portion of the picture, it would help to meld different people from a variety of social and economic levels of the community.

Benjamin Pratt noted that Antrim had qualified easily in regards to income level requirements back in 1988 when the sewer project was done.

Sue McKinnon expressed her belief that the survey is important. It is the perfect time to do it, especially with the Library study beginning, pulling it all together. The flexibility of the program is also a good feature. She noted her appreciation to Bob for all his work on the application.

Connie Kirwin asked that if you accept the grant do you need to provide long-term benefits? Bob responded that a twenty year agreement is necessary. He also pointed out that it doesn't have to be the Grapevine, as long as it targets the same groups of people.

R. A. Harford asked Bob to speculate on what the Town's chances were for receiving this grant. Bob responded that he really couldn't guess. He then proceeded to state that an application can be eligible for the study and grant but not be approved, but that it can be added again in the Town Warrant and another application can be submitted. With each application received, critical feedback is given. Applications are accepted every six months with current deadlines being April 30th and October 30th.

Peter then commented that we can learn from this entire project. That the project is worthwhile and overall this application is just a starting point.

Benjamin Pratt commented that he is concerned that the property be used to its greatest advantage to the Town. Bob responded that the study will answer this.

It was noted that whether the study was funded or not, it would be put on the Town Meeting floor to decide whether or not to apply for a grant.

Bob noted that a written statement for projected use will be posted on the bulliten board re: budget and uses.

Bob thanked all for coming as questions are important and he was glad that so many people are coming to hear about this process.

The meeting adjourned at 7:50 P.M. to the Public Hearing to review the Town's Housing and Community Development Plan.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Hautanen.

ATTENDANCE SHEET : PUBLIC HEARING

Peter Martel

Benjamin Pratt

Su McKinnon

Way Cade-Wegari

Sydney Smith

Connie Kirwin

R. A. HARFORD (REPORTER, JILLAGE)

Pete Moore

Carol L. Smith

Bob Bentz

Minutes of the Public Hearing regarding  
the Town's Housing and Community Development Plan  
April 22, 1997

Those in attendance: See attached list

The meeting opened at 7:50 P.M.

A copy of the Housing and Community Development Plan was handed out to all in attendance.

It was noted that the Town's master plan, done in 1985, was in the process of being revised.

Carol outlined the Plan highlighting that the goals were to improve housing quality, look into programs that address health and educational issues and to encourage economic development.

It was noted that a current Housing and Community Development Plan was needed for the CDBG feasibility study grant application.

The floor was opened to questions or viewpoints with no response.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00 P.M.