



COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

MINUTES

April 18, 2022

12:00 p.m.

Hybrid – Council Chambers

Approved: May 16, 2022

Call to Order

Vice-Chair Robyn Davis called the meeting to order at 12:03 p.m.

Roll Call and Introductions

Members present: Blanca Ruckert, Robyn Davis, JoAnn Miller, Alex Johnson II, Josiah Blaisdell, Roosevelt Gray, Courtney Stubbs, and Steph Nappa

Members absent: Melissa Murphy (excused) and Kenny Larson

Minutes

12:05 p.m.

Motion: Commissioner Josiah Blaisdell moved to approve the March 21, 2022 minutes as presented. Commissioner JoAnn Miller seconded the motion, which passed 8-0.

Agency Consultations

12:05 p.m.

Emma Deane with Albany Helping Hands spoke about the requirements, services, barriers, and needs of the shelter. Deane also spoke of the shelter housing individuals who are on the sex offender registry.

Commissioner Blaisdell questioned Deane about housing those who are on the sex offender registry, which Deane confirmed.

Planner III Anne Catlin spoke of Albany Helping Hands receiving grant money from the state for an expansion project and asked Deane whether there were any barriers that kept them from completing that project. Leigh Bock with Albany Helping Hands said it will take approximately \$100,000 to hire an engineer to design and build needed parking. Catlin further explained Albany Helping Hands has received Community Development Grant Block (CDBG) funds for a roof replacement and spoke of the properties owned in the area around the shelter.

Deane spoke of the changing needs at the shelter, how they satisfy those needs, and if they were able to expand their space, they would provide more services and staff support onsite.

Catlin asked what support the shelter needs to help those who are transitioning to the next stage of housing to which Deane answered saying expanding housing would be huge, and there are people who are ready and waiting to move into housing and those who would need more services in order to prevent them from coming back to the shelter.

Blaisdell suggested adding the ages of individuals and their recidivism rate for those who have sex offenses to the shelter's applications. Deane agreed with the idea and spoke of educating rental companies and the community about individuals who do have sex offenses as well as those same individuals having a treatment program and requirements attached to their offense.

Commissioner Miller asked whether City staff has done a site visit to the shelter to see the progress on construction, if the community has been notified about the services the shelter provides, and what services are being provided during the day. Deane provided information about the services Albany Helping Hands provides for daytime use. Miller also asked about hiring staffing at the shelter once it has been expanded to which Deane answered saying current staff is taking on more work than what is in their job descriptions, but they are hiring more staff as soon as they are able to.

Brian Decker with CHANCE spoke about the property needs and services they provide. Clinton Kendall and Decker both provided information on the current property needs, their current funding, and possible future funding. Kendall and Decker confirmed with Planner II Beth Frelander the CARES Act

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funds would be going towards the HVAC system and the CDBG funds for shower drains. Catlin requested information about CHANCE's needs, population, and services to which Shelter Manager Gary Dees spoke of their dorms, hired staff, and the services provided.

Blaisdell asked whether CHANCE provides services for sex offenders, which Dees said they do not due to the family aspect of the program, and those individuals are redirected to Albany Helping Hands.

Dees and Kendall provided more information about the services CHANCE provides individuals as well barriers individuals face while trying to apply for housing.

Vice-Chair Davis questioned whether other cities have models of how they serve individuals who face barriers with finding housing. Dees answered saying there is a program in Salem that provide tiny homes.

Catlin asked whether CHANCE provides housing vouchers, which Decker confirmed. Catlin spoke of CHANCE serving those needing recovery support and asked if their service has been expanded to other individuals to which Decker and Kendall answered saying those who are experiencing homelessness are the main core of individuals they serve. Catlin also asked if they had the funds, would CHANCE buy housing as a discharge from the shelter, which Decker confirmed.

After a question from Miller regarding where CHANCE is with their current funding, projects, and partnerships, Decker answered saying they have re-engaged with community partners and are getting project back on board. Decker then gave an update on current projects. After a request from Miller, Kendall provided a status update on the HVAC system.

Catlin noted that the Community Services Consortium offers classes that help people with poor rental history get back on their feet, and that CDBG funds could be used to help with the HVAC system or other projects CHANCE may have.

Senate Bill 5561 Funding

12:50 p.m.

Catlin presented the agenda item and requested input from the commission on the process for the Senate Bill 5561 funds and asked for input on funding priorities.

Commissioners Blaisdell and Nappa supported choosing projects that serve residents who are below the 80 percent of area median income. Nappa suggested a requirement for number of units being built per project and prioritizing multi-family housing. Blaisdell suggested adding a priority on organizations that house sex offenders to keep out of parks and public spaces.

Commissioner Johnson II supported services that help children, more seniors are becoming homeless that need help, and getting away from single-family housing. Prefers helping shelters where apartment type setting and more people can receive housing, but not limiting to non-sex offenders. Housing for sex offenders should be case by case since there are different degrees of offenders, to help individuals with sex offenses, and having high and low barrier shelters.

Commissioner Stubbs asked what the end result would be in dispersing this money – is it quality of life, reduced homelessness, or affordable housing? Catlin answered saying it would be what the commission's priorities would be for the funding and reviewed suggested funding priorities.

Blaisdell suggested asking for applications to provide a number of individuals they could help with their project. Davis suggested having applicants provide a commitment of equal access to their program.

Miller agreed with the priorities list and suggested adding a priority of projects that serve residents with the greatest needs. Miller spoke of ensuring agencies who have received previous funding and might submit a letter of intent would be heeding to the requirements of those funds and meeting the needs the commission has identified in the past.

Stubbs spoke of projects that allow homeownership opportunities with smaller homes up to \$250,000, providing Albany Helping Hands with the financing to complete their expansion project, and remodeling properties to make them livable.

Blaisdell agreed with Stubbs' idea of remodeling properties and spoke of helping individuals with sex offenses.

It was suggested that funds be allocated to Albany Helping hands to get their expansion completed.

Stubbs questioned if there could be an incentive for owners and landlords to subsidize housing. Catlin answered saying it would be difficult for the City to provide rent subsidies, but there may be agencies that would be willing to provide that.

Catlin questioned whether the commission would want to keep the three- and four-bedroom rental housing listed as a priority. Stubbs suggested co-op housing.

Miller asked for clarification on the goal of the commission for this meeting to which Catlin answered saying any input the commission has for the letter of intent and the initial funding priorities.

Blaisdell suggested adding a question about whether the applicant's services will be extended to those on the sex offender registry. Catlin spoke of the challenges with where those individuals are allowed to live and the multiple non-profit agencies in the area that house children, and therefore, cannot house sex offenders.

Catlin suggested the commission send any comments to her by the end of the week.

Johnson II questioned whether the funding is strictly for affordable housing, which Catlin clarified it is for programs or services that address housing insecurity, lack of affordable housing, homelessness, and adding capacity.

Blaisdell questioned adding rehabilitating properties to the priorities list to which Catlin reiterated that would be something that fell under adding capacity.

Business from the Public

1:31 p.m.

None.

Business from the Commission

1:31 p.m.

None.

Next Meeting Date

The next regularly scheduled meeting is Monday, May 16, 2022.

Adjournment

Hearing no further business, Vice-Chair Davis adjourned the meeting at 1:31 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

signature on file

Jessica Valentino
Administrative Assistant I

Reviewed by,

signature on file

Anne Catlin
Planner III

*Documents discussed at the meeting that are not in the agenda packet are archived in the record. The documents are available by emailing cdaa@cityofalbany.net.