

**Community Development Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
August 28, 2024**

Committee Members in Attendance:

Chair Jeff Bart; Mayor Byron Champlin; Councilor Jeff Foote; Councilor Judith Kurtz; Councilor Stacy Brown (arrived at 12:04 p.m.); Michael Gfroerer; Kalamoh Donzo; Travis Craig; and Janet Sprague

Absent:

Councilor Paula McLaughlin

Staff:

Tim Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development

Public:

Maria Devlin, President and CEO – Families in Transition

Erica Diamond, Director of Contract Compliance – Families in Transition

Mr. Bart called the meeting to order at 12:01 p.m.

Adoption of May 22, 2024 Minutes (Public & Non-Public)

Mayor Champlin moved the approval of the May 22, 2024 public & sealed, non-public minutes. Ms. Sprague seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous voice vote.

Mr. Bart, with the consensus of the Committee, moved item 4 on the agenda forward.

Community Development Block Grants – Planning Grant Application - Families in Transition (\$25,000):
Proposal to hire a firm to assess the space and potential for additional affordable housing units at the properties located at 9-11 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane.

Maria Devlin, President and CEO of Families in Transition presented the proposed grant to the committee.

Families in Transition (FIT) is a homelessness and housing provider headquartered in Manchester NH. Their mission is to prevent and break the cycle of homelessness through their services which include: two emergency shelters; substance use treatment services both in- and outpatient; a food pantry; and 240 units of low-income housing in various communities. The organization has over 30 years of experience in this work and last year served over 14,000 vulnerable NH community members through these services.

FIT and their property management division, Housing Benefits, own two low-income housing properties in Concord, 9 – 11 Odd Fellows Avenue and 5 Market Lane. Together these properties offer 16-units of low-income housing (serving a total of 34 people), along with laundry facilities, a community room, and space for a commercial business. Supportive case management services are provided to tenants to help support their housing stabilization, empowering tenants to increase their self-sufficiency to the maximum extent possible.

In 2003 when the Concord project was initially created, community rooms were an important part of the consideration when renovating the buildings. However, since that time a lot has changed regarding how services are offered to individuals and families with best practice now being to provide services within an individuals or family's 'home' and to follow the Housing First model of care to these tenants. Visiting a

tenant in their 'home' helps ensure the individual/family is managing their home appropriately, that the unit is well cared for, and the tenant understands the responsibilities of taking care of themselves, as well as their space.

On top of community spaces that are underutilized there is commercial space at 5 Market Lane that was once used for the NH Coalition to End Homelessness, who no longer needs the space.

FIT is seeking support from the City to apply for a CDBG planning grant of \$25,000 to hire an architectural firm to perform a space analysis on these two buildings. A space analysis would highlight any underutilized space(s) that could be renovated into low-income housing, which is a statewide need given the current housing market, especially for the most vulnerable community members. If FIT were able to develop preliminary architectural and engineering designs and cost estimates through this planning grant, they would be able to utilize this information to seek further funding from CDBG, and other funders, in 2025. The end result would likely be an additional 2-4 new housing units in the 2 buildings.

Mr. Thompson summarized the CDBG process, starting with a recommendation from CDAC, action by the City Council, then consideration by the Community Development Finance Authority (CDFA). The City and sub-grantees are aided by CDBG Consultant Donna Lane who acts as the City's administrator of all CDBG grants through the application and grant process.

Mr. Bart asked if there were zoning restrictions on utilizing first floor space. Mr. Thompson stated that that would be reviewed through the study process, and any relief necessary could be identified.

Mayor Champlin asked transitional housing was still the organization's focus. Ms. Devlin stated yes, but given the housing market tenants are typically staying in their units longer term. The current housing market makes it a struggle to find permanent housing for their tenants, but through their support services, that is still the goal.

Mr. Donzo asked what programs were provided to their tenants. Ms. Devlin explained that there are case managers to assist tenants with finances, child care, governmental benefits, and working to connect with local partner organizations. Mr. Donzo asked if there was any employment assistance offered. Ms. Devlin stated that case managers help where they can, but their tenants typically won't or can't enter the traditional workforce due to disability or other factors. She stated that all of their apartment units are subsidized, such that most tenants pay less than \$500 per month, with one as low as \$12 per month.

Mr. Gfrorer asked if FIT had any other locations other than Manchester and Concord. Ms. Devlin stated that FIT previously had space in Dover, which was transferred to another non-profit, and are in the process on moving out of space in Wolfeboro, leaving only Concord and Manchester locations.

Councilor Kurtz asked if other non-residential uses for the space was considered, such as child care. Ms. Devlin stated that FIT had attempted to support child care uses in the past, but were not successful. Councilor Kurtz asked how long the spaces had been vacant, and was informed that vacancies have persisted since pre-COVID.

Councilor Foote asked if the properties were tax-exempt. Mr. Thompson stated he would research, Mayor Champlin indicated he believed that they were paying taxes or there was a payment-in-lieu-of-taxes (PILOT) in place.

Mr. Bart indicated that FIT was a great neighbor to his business, located in the same area of Bicentennial Square.

Councilor Brown asked how the \$25,000 grant request was determined. Mr. Thompson explained that the City always seeks authorization for the maximum amount available for CDBG grant applications, which in the case of a Planning Grant is \$25,000.

Mr. Gfrorer moved to recommend the City Council authorize the application for Families in Transition with CDFA for the CDBG feasibility/planning grant. Mayor Champlin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Revolving Loan Fund Status Report

Mr. Thompson presented the summary of loans and financial statistics for the Revolving Loan Fund:

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| Loans in Portfolio: | 13 |
| Pending Disbursement: | <i>Potential Deferred Loan to be discussed by CDAC on August 28, 2024</i> |
| Outstanding Balance (All Loans): | \$1,132,054.69 (principal only) |
| Funds Available to Lend: | Approximately \$587,000 |

Mr. Thompson also summarized for the history since 2009 of deferred loans/grants and interest rates, noting that only one deferred loan (in 2013) had been issued with a rate other than 0%.

Mr. Thompson also summarized the latest status reports from Consultant Donna Lane for open CDBG grants:

- Concord Center to End Homelessness - buying 6 S. State Street and renovating into 8 one-bedroom apartments. Property acquisition now scheduled for September (they have secured additional funding commitments they needed for the rehabilitation). Expect to be complete approximately June 2025. CDBG funds of \$475,000 to be applied to the purchase price of \$610,000. CDBG \$500,000, Total Project Cost \$2.5mil+/-.
- Penacook Boys & Girls Club - construction started in July 2023 and completed July 2024, CDBG funds of \$725,000 were applied toward construction. CDBG \$750,000, Total Project Cost \$5mil+/- . Boys & Girls Club portion of the building has opened. They have two rooms open, school age and toddler to age 1. They are hiring and are hoping to open the infant room and preschool room within the next two weeks.
- Community Justice Center – We submitted a request for \$25,000 for a Planning Study to look at potential site for a proposed Community Justice Center. CDFA will decide at their Advisory Board Meeting November 7, 2024.

Non-Public Session

Councilor Kurtz moved to go into non-public session under *RSA 91-A:3, II(c) matters which, if discussed in public, would likely affect adversely the reputation of any person, other than a member of this board, unless such person requests an open meeting. This exemption shall extend to include any application for assistance or tax abatement or waiver of a fee, fine or other levy, if based on inability to pay or poverty of the applicant.* Councilor Brown seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held and the vote was unanimous in support of the motion. The non-public session began at 12:33 p.m.

Councilor Kurtz moved to come out of non-public session. Mayor Champlin seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held and the vote was unanimous in support of the motion. The non-public session ended at 12:54 p.m.

Upon conclusion of the non-public session, Mayor Champlin moved to seal the minutes of the non-public session. Councilor Kurtz seconded the motion. A roll call vote was held and the vote was unanimous in support of the motion.

Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) Applications

Councilor Kurtz moved to waive the rental income requirement and debt to income ratio requirements of the Program Income Reuse Plan and further to direct City staff to proceed with loan closing for a deferred loan of up to \$20,000, with a 3% interest rate per year for 20 years (unless otherwise repaid through sale or refinance of the property prior to the 20-year period) for the purpose of repairs to sewer pipes at the property located at 50 Jackson Street. Councilor Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Other Business

None.

Adjournment

Mr. Gfroerer moved to adjourn. Councilor Brown seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Thompson, AICP, Assistant Director of Community Development