

PUBLIC HEARING

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN

January 25, 2007

A public hearing was held on Thursday, January 25, 2007, at 11:00 a.m. in the First Floor Auditorium, Building "A," Kane County Government Center, Geneva, Illinois, to receive public comment regarding housing and community development needs and the availability of federal funding to address those needs during Program Year 2007.

Hearing Officer Scott Berger opened the hearing at 11:03 a.m. The following were present: Alderman Ron Singer from the City of Geneva, Kathy Hazelwood from the Association for Individual Development, Jeff and Janet Gilbert from Hope for Tomorrow, Jo Ann Armenta from the League of United Latin American Citizens from Elgin, and Lowell Tosch from Community Contacts, Inc. of Elgin.

Overview of CDBG and HOME Programs and Eligible Activities - Berger stated that the purpose of the hearing was to give citizens an opportunity to comment on housing and community development needs for the upcoming program year, noting that Kane County is the recipient of two forms of community development and housing assistance as follows:

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program was created in 1974 by Congress to provide housing and community development funding to states, cities, and some counties that meet certain population levels. Berger discussed the purposes for which these funds could be used including, but not limited to, affordable housing, infrastructure, and parks and community center construction and rehabilitation.

The HOME Investment Partnerships Program functions in conjunction with the City of Elgin and includes most Kane County municipalities. The goal of the program is to address the affordable housing needs of low-income individuals and households. Berger noted this funding source is not as flexible as the CDBG Program, given that it is focused exclusively on affordable housing.

It was noted that Aurora and Elgin receive their own CDBG funds and are not part of the Kane County CDBG Program and that three smaller communities have opted out of the county's CDBG and HOME Programs. They are Montgomery, Algonquin, and the Kane County portion of Hoffman Estates. In all, twenty-four municipalities participate in the county's CDBG Program and, by extension, also participate in the HOME Program and partner with the City of Elgin.

Overview of Needs and Strategies Identified in Consolidated Plan for 2005-2009 - Berger stated that to qualify for CDBG and HOME funds a Consolidated Plan must be prepared every five years and supplemented each year with an annual action plan. The plan assesses local needs and sets out how federal funding will be used to address those needs. The 5-year Consolidated Plan was adopted in 2005, and a copy of the Executive Summary is part of the distribution materials for this hearing. It was noted that the strategic plan identifies the five highest priorities to be addressed over the five-year period. They are:

- (1) Affordable housing to include preservation of existing housing units and to create additional units where needed;
- (2) Infrastructure affecting the quality of neighborhoods and communities;
- (3) Public facilities and the construction, rehabilitation, and improvement of parks, community centers where public services are received, offices of non-profit organizations that serve low and moderate income persons with public services including capital improvement projects;
- (4) Maintenance and expansion of emergency shelters and transitional housing facilities and services for the homeless population and support of the Continuum of Care which is a partnership throughout Kane County; and
- (5) Planning and capacity building. Berger noted that the high rate of growth in the area identifies the need for smart planning and allocation of resources.

Projection of FY2007 Federal Awards, Program Income, and Amount to Benefit L/M Persons - Berger noted that the County does not yet know how many dollars will be received for 2007 for the year beginning June 1 because the HUD

budget has not been finalized. It is estimated that \$1,250,000 of new CDBG funds will be available in 2007. It is also anticipated that \$50,000 will come back to the County from the housing rehabilitation program with total projected funds expected to be \$1,300,000. The amount expected to benefit low- and moderate-income citizens, at a minimum, is expected to be \$728,000. Under the HOME Program, \$750,000 in new funding is anticipated, with \$675,000 being the amount that must be allocated for the benefit of low- and moderate-income persons. Berger also noted that this was the beginning of the allocation process and wanted to remind everyone of the 5-year plan noting the priorities with the purpose of this hearing being to give the public an opportunity to comment as to what were the needs in Kane County for the upcoming year.

Public Comment - Armenta inquired on how to identify priority places in the County and asked for clarification on what they were. Berger explained that he could provide information on locations designated as priority places in the 2030 plan and said they were small areas in the County that are experiencing growth or are under strong development pressure allowing an opportunity to link transportation with smart-growth principles to maximize use of the land.

Armenta inquired about the specific partnership with the City of Elgin, the areas included under the CDBG and HOME programs and who to make application with as it relates to Elgin and the County for CDBG and HOME funding. Berger explained that the HOME Program is a partnership with the City of Elgin. Each jurisdiction manages its own CDBG program and, in Elgin, that is done by city's Community Development Department. The county manages the HOME program on behalf of the Kane-Elgin partnership. The areas served by the HOME Program includes all of Kane County, except the City of Aurora, the Village of Montgomery, the Village of Hoffman Estates, and the Village of Algonquin. Elgin is part of the HOME Program, including that part of the city that is in Cook County.

Berger also stated that although Aurora and Elgin are not part of the county's CDBG program area, there are services provided to citizens from the county's program area by organizations and facilities that are located inside those cities. For that reason, the county occasionally considers funding activities that are physically located in those communities.

Hazelwood inquired if public facilities would qualify even if they are in Elgin. Berger explained that even if the project was not physically located in the Kane County CDBG program area, it could be considered. Berger also stated that the County would inquire if the applicant had applied with Elgin or another community for CDBG funds, and at a minimum the County would like to see a partnership approach to the funding.

Jeff Gilbert inquired about group housing support within the City of Aurora and if that would be eligible. Berger explained that group housing is slightly different because the housing is for a specific location rather than an overall service area. Berger noted that it could be considered but the preference is that it be within the program area.

Janet Gilbert asked if the HOME Program application is separate from CDBG. Berger stated that it was and commented that funding is provided for housing rehabilitation, home-buyer assistance, and the rental development program.

Singer read a prepared statement regarding the need to provide social services to senior citizens. His comments will be included with this record.

Hazelwood reviewed statistics of housing needs of several groups of people in the area as well as the need for rent subsidies and vouchers, group homes, etc, in the community. She stated that more affordable housing should be made available.

Jeff Gilbert gave an overview of his organization and stated that their clientele have a great need for affordable housing.

There being no further discussion, the hearing was closed at 11:30 a.m.

Barbara Rahden
Recording Secretary