

**The JOINT CD and FINANCE Committees** held a meeting on **Monday, November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023** beginning at 6:00 P.M.

**CD Members Present:** Chair Callahan, Mitchell, Oswald, Schneider

**Finance Members Present:** Chair Stewart, Tollett, Davis, Schneider, Cerra

**Excused Absence:** Lipian

**Other Council Members Present:** Corbin and Simmons

**Others Present:** Law Director Deery, Safety Service Dir Lundy, Mayor Whitfield, Finance Dir Pileski, Asst Finance Dir Farrell, Asst Dir Calvert, Asst Dir Williams, Engineer McKillips, CD Dir Scott, CD Manager Almobayyed, Chief Pelko, Chief Pronesti, Water Team Leader Jacob

**1. Approval of the Joint Meeting Minutes from November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

*Motion made by Mr. Cerra, seconded by Mrs. Mitchell to approve the said minutes.*

**MOTION CARRIED**

**2. The matter of the PY 2024 Community Development Block Grant Action Plan, 5-Year Consolidated Plan.**

*(Final Consideration and Action requested).*

Referred By: CD Manager Almobayyed

Dir Scott said this is for the proposed 2024 CDBG budget along with the Fair Housing update for 2024. The draft budget has been available for public comment for the last 30 days and her office did not receive any comments on that plan.

She will go over choices that were made in October and if the committee would like to adjust, they can do so, but she is requesting a vote this evening so the action plan can go to full council next week. They will adjust the budgets accordingly as they have in the past depending on what the actual allocations will be.

On the screen is the lists of requests and the CD recommendations. Per the committee's request they divided other proposed dollar amounts per the grant which was recommended that those organizations be funded. Salvation Army was proposed to be funded under CDBG Covid dollars along with a small portion of Goodwill's request and a portion of the Lorain County Urban League Health Svcs request, which require substantial amendment which her office would do if the plan would move forward. Also, \$38,000 of Goodwill's request was to be funded under Issue 6 Economic Dev. Open Rec Reach & Rise and Senior Programming would be funded under ARPA. That was where they left off from the October meeting. If there are any adjustments or if the committee is ready to proceed as proposed, we can work on that.

Mr. Stewart said he feels with using the Issue 6 Funds for employment training and that we've never warranted anyone receiving that significant amount of funds for that and he

would not support that. As far as giving something towards training if perhaps the director can make a recommendation as far as maybe \$15,000, but not from Issue 6. Dir Scott said she did have that discussion in their office knowing there was a concern with this. So, they updated a proposed spread sheet where nothing would be funded from Issue 6. They would give Goodwill \$10,000 in the 2024 allocation and it would reduce Horizon's activity which was originally \$20,000 and down to \$16,437 and Save Our Children's request which was just over \$21,000 down to \$15,000, to make up for that difference and still provide Goodwill with that \$2,683 in the CDBG Covid funds to get those expended. And the other funding amounts remain the same from the last meeting.

Mr. Tollett said he could support the revised proposal. He agrees with Mr. Stewart on the Issue 6 dollars.

Law Dir Deery reminded the committees that the Pocket Park on West Ave. has not yet been designated by Council as a Park Facility and would request that should be done.

Mayor Whitfield said they will put in a referral for the Pocket Park.

There were no other questions or concerns and Chair asked for a motion.

**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT:**

**Motion was made by Mrs. Mitchell and second by Mr. Oswald to authorize the 'said' CDBG Action Plan and 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**FINANCE:**

**Motion was made by Mr. Cerra and second by Mr. Schneider to authorize the 'said' CDBG Action Plan and 2025-2029 Consolidated Plan.**

**MOTION CARRIED COMMITTEE REPORT WRITTEN**

**3. The matter of reviewing Community feedback and progress related to the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Development in preparation for the completion a Draft Plan.**

Referred By: Asst Safety Svc Dir Calvert **[DISCUSSION ONLY]**

Dir Calvert said they have been working on this a lot over the past few months. They held walking tours and third Thursday events and they have gotten feedback from the community about the comprehensive plan effort. MS Consultants have been able to take that information and feedback as well as research and statistical analysis that they are now at the point where we've got a pretty solid picture of what is important to the community and what we need to do next. They are going to be doing a significant outreach for final comments from the community on the land use plan and strategies for comprehensive goals. They will be launching an interactive exercise on the Our Elyria webpage. They will do Facebook posts, radio announcements, information at City Rec

Centers to get the message out. They are hoping to have a draft plan to present to City Council after the New Year.

They will ask for City Council to adopt the plan and at that point they will make zoning code changes to facilitate ease of use as well to help achieve those goals. MS Consultants are here this evening; Ben Turin and Alex Long to give more details about the feedback they've received.

Ben Turin – Planner with MS Consultants and part of the Our Elyria Project. He listed the rest of the project team which includes; Shannon Fergus – Project Manager, Zachary Shultz – Urban Design & Engagement, Alex Long – Urban Design and Nolan Nicase – Urban & Environmental Planner. They are partners with Zone Co who will be working on new zoning ordinances for the City to follow this planning effort.

Mr. Turin went over the presentation and copies of that presentation is included with these meeting minutes.

One of the things they need to accomplish is to update the zoning codes, which haven't been updated since the 1970's. This plan could pull the City into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and to take into consideration as how has the land use been, what does the zoning code look like and how can we reshape that to position Elyria better for a 21<sup>st</sup> century economy.

Mr. Turin said the presentation he just gave is just a snapshot of where the City is today and what they are working with as they think about ways to move Elyria forward with a vision developed by the community and from the community. They interviewed 8 stake holders from non-profits, City Department Heads and other Community Partners to get their perspective on Elyria and various issues. The survey closed in mid-May and they got 400 responses which is above what they usually get. The number one issue facing the city is Safety and Crime, Economy and Transportation came in second and third. Other things residents want are to have more restaurants and more places to shop and entertainment.

Of the four walking tours; one was near Midway Mall, west side, east side and near the Amtrak station. These tours were to get looks at each neighborhood and to see what was liked and what was missing in neighborhoods. There are a few more engagement activities; the online activity, to be able to comment on the recommendations in the plan. There will be an Open House in January to go over the final recommendations of the plan. Then there will be another Open House to go over the zoning draft plan in February.

Alex Long went over the priority development areas, which are 3 sites that we're chosen by the community. They are sites that have high opportunities or are vacant sites; Shane Furniture site, Blue Star property and possibly replacement for the south side Aldi grocery store which is being relocated.

Blue Star property is reimagined as a recreation area which would include passive space and walking trails and a co-working facility or a place for a new business.

The Shane building has been demolished and leaves a missing piece in the downtown area. Suggestion is to replace the area with a new building with flexible use. The bottom floor would be open retail to street level. Upper floors could be co-working space and the upper floors could be residential units and a rooftop terrace. Southside grocery to have a store that would be accessible to residents on the west and south sides of the city. They are looking at prime piece of real estate property on the riverbank that is vacant. The proposed use would be a mixed-use complex that would have a grocery store on the bottom floor.

Mr. Turin said they worked with the steering committee that was made up of non-profit leaders, residents and business owners. Mr. Turin discussed the overarching goals that would help steer the plan; Quality of Life, Economic Development, Land Use, Housing, Parks & Rec and Transportation.

MS Consultants has been developing strategies under each of these goals over the last few months.

Next is the futued land use districts which will be to inform the zoning code update. In order to perform the zoning code update, there has to be a recommendation in the City's comprehensive plan. Elyria is somewhat forward thinking in trying to do the comprehensive plan and the zoning update one after the other instead of spending months or years between the planning and the zoning update. The housing and residential codes are to capture simplified top level looks of the different types of land use across the City.

The district that will have the most change will be the 'Transformational Open Space'. It is mainly meant for the undeveloped areas along Leo Bullock Parkway. It's a way for the City to take a case by case basis for approving development in this area while having flexibility in the zoning code so it doesn't have to be industrial, it doesn't have to be residential. The City can look at each development application that comes in and sees whether it fits and that it's not excluded because some other type of use happens to be nearby. They have not heard from Zone Co about exactly which land use classifications will be under this category but it's really meant to just to provide with more flexibility rather than less in the zoning code. So that is the comprehensive planning effort. The online engagement to look at the future land use district and strategies and recommendations of the plan opens tomorrow at OURELYRIA.COM. And that ended the presentation.

Mr. Tollett asked what cost burdened meant?

Mr. Turin said it is a way saying residents who spend more than a third of their income o housing and they may have to sacrifice other things to pay those costs.

Mrs. Mitchell asked how much land on Bullocks Parkway is available for development that is not farmland?

Mr. Turin did not have the exact acreage and CD would be able to have that answer.

Asst Dir Calvert said they know of at least 250 acres that are potentially developable. This is part of the reason that they are doing the flexibility because they want the flexibility in that area of the City because there is a lot of work that needs to be done to understand if there are deed restrictions on any of those properties for industrial or commercial use. Some areas may have to remain dedicated agricultural use. In addition, there are wetland issues on several properties. So, they don't know how much of that acreage truly can be developed is going to depend on wetlands mitigation and how that can be used or pieced together in a way that it can meet the need of the market and the City would facilitate the development there.

Mayor Whitfield brought up whether the City would own the land on Leo Bullocks Parkway and that's a question for Council to look at a later date. The City has external tools such as the Community Improvement Corp and the Community Development Corp that can be utilized, but what roles does this Council play in terms of developing. It would be great if the City already has site control.

Chair Callahan thanked Ben Turin and Alex Long of MS Consultants for their presentation.

There was no other business for Community Development and Chair asked for a motion to adjourn.

**Motion made by Mr. Oswald and second by Mrs. Mitchell to adjourn Community Development at 6:50 P.M.**

**MOTION CARRIED**

*The evening's Committee Development Committee has adjourned at 6:50 P.M.*

*The evening's meetings continued with The Finance Committee Meeting which began at 7:05 P.M.*

Respectfully Submitted by,  
Colleen Rosado, Secretary/Administrative Assistant