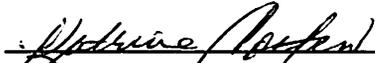


The following comments were read during the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program FY 2015 Public Hearing held on Monday July 14, 2014. It is a *true copy*, excerpted from the City Council Meeting Minutes of Monday July 14, 2014.



Katrina Cotten
Deputy City Clerk

PUBLIC HEARING CONCERNING CDBG PROGRAM FY 2015

Mayor Kennedy called a public hearing to receive comments regarding the Housing and Community Development needs of the City of Newburgh to assist in the preparation of its *Housing and Community Development Plan* for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program for fiscal year 2015, and the development of the 2015-2019 *Five-Year Comprehensive Plan*.

Dr. Ernest Swiger, the consultant to the City of Newburgh, presented various key issues for preparing the Five-Year Consolidated Plan. It is a strategic plan that outlines the city's needs, objectives and priorities for spending the federal funds. An important aspect of the plan is to benefit low and moderate income families and residents of the community. There are three main objectives of HUD: to provide decent housing, provide suitable living environments and provide job opportunities and opportunity for economic growth. Federal funds can't be used for any other purpose. Swiger pointed out that the City of Newburgh is going to receive \$787,179 in the upcoming year. Right now we are in the research and community input phase. Data provided by HUD will be utilized too, as well as supplemental reports and statistics from the U.S. Census Bureau. This is the first public hearing for the planning phase. The draft document will most likely be available for public scrutiny and review in September. November 15th is the deadline to submit the documents to HUD.

Councilwoman Abrams asked Swiger what is the deadline for the submission of comments.

Swiger explained that comments could be submitted up until late September/early October.

Janet Gianopolous was glad to see the screens being utilized for the CDBG presentation. We have to realize that there are many people in Newburgh who are *capable*. But we continue to make decisions from a perceived perspective that people are unable to do for themselves. Let us choose projects that will enable people from Newburgh to accomplish things instead of us continuing to play these takes in which it is perceived that people can't do themselves. We need to look at more infrastructure-type projects, over-arching safety projects, and things that will remain with us and last. We should not just seek seasonal projects where we hand out money, thus enabling people.

Mike Curry cautioned the council not to borrow funds from other agencies to pay back HUD. This practice did, in fact, happen to pay pensions and other pet projects.

Michael Gabor pointed out that last year \$300K of CDBG money was used with the intention of transferring property to the Land Bank. If that has not occurred yet, then that money should be transferred back into our coffers by the Land Bank if they indeed want those properties.

Courtney Allen remarked that she is confused by all of the discussion this evening. This is the first meeting that she is attending. Since it is a five-year plan, she is concerned that there could be an issue, in which people could say later on that they did not know what was in the contract.

There were no additional comments at this time.

**COUNCIL COMMENTS AND SUBSEQUENT VOTE TO CLOSE PUBLIC
HEARING CONCERNING CDBG FY 2015**

Mayor Kennedy explained that we receive money from the Federal Government because we are an *Entitlement* city. Our poverty rate is in such condition that we need extra funds to sustain the city. The amount is roughly \$780K a year. It is channeled into the city, but we have to have a plan in place to spend it. HUD has very strict rules and regulations for expenditure in the community. In fact, in past years the City of Newburgh did not comply with HUD guidelines. We had to go through a whole process to get ourselves back on track. Kennedy pointed out that this happened before she took office. Now we must have a new Five-Year Plan for 2015. There are housing and infrastructure needs in the city. We are looking to spend our money wisely to create long term results. It is really important to get public input because this council does not have all of the answers.

Councilwoman Mejia welcomed all of the newcomers, and she hopes to see everyone at the next public hearing. She asked us to think about the areas in which we live, that could benefit from infrastructural improvements. The idea is: *How do we use these federal funds to improve our community?*

Councilwoman Abrams moved and Councilman Brown seconded that the council close the public hearing concerning CDBG FY 2015.

Ayes- Councilwoman Abrams, Councilwoman Angelo, Councilman Brown, Councilwoman Holmes, Councilwoman Mejia, Mayor Kennedy-6

No- Councilwoman Lee-1

PUBLIC HEARING CLOSED