



Minutes of the Oberlin City Council Public Hearing

Held on April 16, 2012

7:15 P.M.

Purpose: Regarding a proposed request for CDBG funding under the Formula Allocation Grant Program.

President Rimbart called the Public Hearing to order at 7:26 p.m. for the above stated purpose.

Members Present: Scott Broadwell, Bryan Burgess, Sharon Soucy, Ronnie Rimbart, Charles Peterson, Aaron Mucciolo.

Members Absent: Elizabeth Meadows (Excused)

Others Present: Belinda Anderson, Clerk of Council; Eric Norenberg, City Manager; Tita Reed, Economic Development Officer, Patty Lines, Lines and Associates Inc.

Planning and Development Director Gary Boyle provided an overview of the CDBG Formula Allocation Program.

Boyle remarked that the CDBG program was intended to provide benefit to low and moderate income persons, to avoid the creation of/or assist with the removal of slum and blight conditions or assist with other urgent or unforeseen needs of the community. The City is required to conduct two (2) public hearings whenever a grant application for assistance is to be filed under the CDBG program. The City conducted the first public hearing to provide general information on the CDBG programs on February 27th and this is the second required public hearing. Notice of this hearing was published in the Oberlin News Tribune on April 5th and that publication more than satisfies the HUD and ODOD rule that ten (10) days notice of the hearing be provided. The City has been advised by the Lorain County Community Development Department that funding is potentially available under the CDBG Formula Allocation Program. At this time the county has not indicated the exact amount of funding that could potentially be available under the program. This is a competitive program and other communities in the county may also be seeking grant funding. Grant applications under the program must be submitted to the county by Monday, April 30th. The City has identified that the installation of accessible pedestrian signals providing audible alerts at a downtown intersection would benefit visually – impaired persons. Such an installation is considered to be an eligible activity under the CDBG program rules. The Electric Department has reviewed the possible installation of such an audible alert system with TMS Engineers and Steve Dupee is here to discuss the technical aspects of such a proposal.

Dupee remarked that through previous discussions Council members expressed an interest in exploring the use of Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS) for traffic signal system improvements at major intersections in the downtown area. An APS is defined as a device that communicates information about pedestrian timing in a non-visual format such as audible tones, verbal messages and/or vibrating surfaces.

There are two major types of APS including a pedestrian head-mounted audible alert system and a pedestrian signal pushbutton- integrated system. The major difference is that one system operates with every traffic cycle change, it occurs 24 hours a day/7 days a week. The second system is a push button activated system that only operates upon depression of a push button control. Staff has not had an assessment to determine the pros and cons of either system. It is important to have TMS come in and do a more detailed engineering analysis and review of the intersection, to determine which system might work best at Main and College. It is important to note that the grant request is for a system that employs the push-button activated controls which is the more expensive system at \$37,501. Dupee remarked that there is a description of how each of these systems worked in the memo but he would be happy to try to answer any questions.

Burgess asked how the vibrating system would work. Dupee provided a brief explanation. Broadwell asked if any of these systems were in use in the area. Dupee remarked that there was one in Maple Heights but he would have to check and see if there is one closer. Burgess noted that through the course of the study it might be helpful to remind the consultants that there are people who live downtown and something that chirps all night might not be something that is desirable. Dupee remarked that he and the City Manager also talked about reaching out to some of the visually impaired citizens in the community to get their feedback on the systems to ensure that it meets their needs.

Megan Schief, a resident with visually impaired needs said that she supported purchasing the more expensive push-button system because it was much more secured for a disabled or blind person. She added that she thought that there were some located in Lakewood but she wasn't sure.

Adjournment: Being that there was no further business to come before Council the public hearing adjourned at 7:27 p.m.

Attest:

 BELINDA B. ANDERSON, CMC
 CLERK OF COUNCIL

 RONNIE J. RIMBERT
 PRESIDENT OF COUNCIL

Approved: 05/21/2012

Posted: 05/22/2012