

**NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION
AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE**

Agenda

Monday, September 18, 2023 START TIME 6:30 pm

Zoom Meeting Info:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88071589319>

Phone: 833 548 0282 US Toll-free

Meeting ID: 880 7158 9319

1. Approve agenda
2. Comments from the public
3. Approve August 14, 2023 AHSC Meeting Minutes
4. Planning for fall outreach and education about affordable housing and AHSC activities
5. Proposed Vermont Community Development Program grant application.
6. Adjourn

Enclosures:

AHSC Minutes, August 14, 2023
VCDP Planning Grant Template

NORWICH PLANNING COMMISSION AFFORDABLE HOUSING SUBCOMMITTEE

Monday August 14, 2023 Minutes

Meeting began at 6:30

Members present: Jeff Goodrich, Gordon Green, Brian Loeb, Jeff Lubell, Paul Manganiello

Public attendee: Marsha Price

- 1. Approve Agenda:** Moved by Brian L., seconded by Paul M.; passed unanimously.
- 2. Comments from the Public:** Marsha related that she was interested in affordable housing and wanted to learn more about what the plans and current proposals are to address the problem.
- 3. Approve June 19, 2023 AHSC Meeting Minutes:** Moved by Paul M., seconded by Brian L. Passed 3-0 with 2 abstentions. (Note: There was no meeting in July due to lack of a quorum.)
- 4. Proposed Vermont Community Development Program (VCD) grant application, New Boston Road parcel:**

Jeff L. met with the Acting Town Manager, Brennan Duffy, who asked Jeff to delay the submission until the next round, which is due in February. Jeff L. recommended we delay the application until that time as this will give us more time to work through all the different layers of review. The plan is to draft the proposal in September; work with the Planning Committee in October; update the Selectboard in November; hold a public meeting in December; and return to the Selectboard in January for final approval before submission by the end of January.

Other issues:

1. Jeff L. proposed to work with the various Norwich Faith-based communities to develop an outreach event on affordable housing for October or November. Representatives will be invited to join the AHSC meeting in September to plan the event. The event should be broadly advertised and probably “hybrid”.
2. The subcommittee and Marsha discussed ways to encourage Accessory Dwelling Units); difficulty getting accurate data on the number of Norwich ADUs and how many are “really” affordable; Hanover’s recently passed bill which requires owners of rental options to register rentals; and the question of how landowners learn about septic requirements.

3. The subcommittee discussed the Planning Commission's new subcommittees, including one on land use, and how to interact with them. Paul M., requested a regular update on the subcommittee's monthly agenda for updates on Planning Commission activities.
4. Agenda for Sept. 18 at 6:30 meeting:
 - a. Review draft VCDP Planning Grant application
 - b. Review fact sheets on different AHSC initiatives
 - c. Plan outreach event

Adjourn: unanimously passed

Submitted by Paul Manganiello

Vermont Community Development Program

Planning Grant Application

Instructions:

https://outside.vermont.gov/agency/ACCD/ACCD_Web_Docs/CD/VCDP/Applicant/CD-VCDP-Planning-Grant-Instructions.pdf

Executive Summary

Please identify the working title for your project, once saved the title used will be the title that will appear when hovering over the application identifier within the system.

Consortium

If applying as a consortium, mark yes and then mark each applicable municipality checkbox in the list labeled 'Participating Municipalities'. A consortium is formed when two or more municipalities submit a joint application with one municipality agreeing to serve as the lead grantee.

Chief Executive Officer

List the name and title of the elected Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the municipality. In the case of a joint application, it is the name of the lead applicant's CEO that should be entered. For those municipalities with a municipal manager or administrator, this person can act as the CEO if so authorized by the elected governing body (city council, board of selectmen or trustees), to act on behalf of the municipality.

Contact Person

Please provide the name of the person designated to be your day-to-day contact for the VCDP with respect to the application. This person shall be responsible for:

- keeping all applicant partners advised as to application progress and communication with the VCDP
- providing the VCDP information as may be needed during the application review process
- securing decisions from the applicant(s) and others involved with the project with respect to any issues about the project which may arise during application review

Person who prepared this application

If we have questions or need clarification, it is a big help to have the name of the person who did the work of putting together the application. If the Contact Person did the work, just indicate that this is the case. The Grantee Roles & Capacity page should also be completed in the application.

Estimated Project Funding

This section automatically populates based on the budget pages that you fill out in the online system. No dollar amounts will appear in this field until you have built your budget pages and saved this page.

Subgrantee and Borrower

If your project involves a subgrant or loan, the legal name, complete address, DUNS# and Federal ID# for the subgrantee and borrower are required. Select N/A if your project does not have a Subgrantee or Borrower.

National and State Objectives

National Objectives

- Low-Moderate Income (LMI) - Provide a benefit primarily to persons with very low, low and moderate incomes. If you propose to meet the National Objectives by serving persons of very low, low, and moderate income, please bear in mind that you will be required to document that the project has achieved the proposed benefit within the grant period by demonstrating that at least 51% of the individuals served are persons of low- or moderate-income. *Please Note: Any projects being considered under a Planning Grant must have the potential for providing benefit where at least 51% of those served would be persons with very low, low or moderate incomes.
- Slums & Blight - Eliminate a slum or blighted condition. Elimination of a slum or a blighted condition on a spot or area basis is a means to provide benefit under the Federal Act. However, only limited funds are available due to statutory requirements dictating the amount of funds that must meet the low- and moderate-income national objective. For further information on qualifying as a Slums and Blight project refer to the Criteria for Slums and Blight.
- Urgent Need - Meet a condition that recently became an urgent need. Addressing a community's urgent need may provide benefit under the Federal Act. However, only limited funds are available due to statutory requirements dictating the amount of funds that must meet the low- and moderate-income national objective. For further information, refer to the Code Federal Regulations 24 CFR 570.483.

State Objectives

- Housing - Conserve, expand, and improve housing.
- Economic Development - Create and retain jobs.
- Public Facilities - Improve public facilities in support of housing or economic development activities, provides other public benefit or where there is a threat to the public health and safety.
- Public Services – Provide services that support job creation and/or retention, support family self sufficiency, support housing, or assist persons with special needs.

Program Management and General Administration

General Administration

General Administration activities relate to the overall management of the VCDP grant. These functions are common to any VCDP grant and include environmental review, financial management, progress reports, requisitions, procurement and final program reports/closeout, among others.

Procured According to VCDP Standards

Goods and services, such as buying supplies, retaining design professionals and awarding construction contracts are all subject to procurement procedures. The appropriate method for any given product or service is dependent on the estimated cost or price, whether the procurement is for a service or product, the type of contract to be utilized, whether the service or product is unique, whether there is any eligible, qualified competition. The key element of procurement is that the entire process provides for full and open competition.

Environmental Review Release

You must secure an Environmental Review Release (ER) letter from the Agency prior to obligating any funds, such as offering contracts, beginning planning work, or requisitioning CDBG funds.

Project Description

Service Area

Indicate the area/region your project will service. This can be as small as a neighborhood in your town or could encompass a county or larger region.

Floodplain

Under the Environmental Review process, you must consider the potential impact the project may have to a designated floodplain. Contact the relevant town clerk, regional planning commission, or the FEMA Map Service to obtain a copy of the floodplain map covering your project area.

Designated Downtown/Village

Towns and villages that receive downtown/village designation are eligible for a number of benefits, including tax credits, loans and grants from various state agencies, and priority consideration from other state programs and agencies.

Budget

Budget Considerations for General Administration

All planning grants must have General Administration in the budget. These are costs related to the overall management of the VCDP grant. General Administration work common to any VCDP grant includes environmental review, financial management, progress reports, requisitions, procurement, the final program reports/closeout, among others.

1. Up to eight percent of the VCDP request (not the total project cost) for all grant types and projects, other than scattered site housing developments, may be budgeted for General Administration activities. If this amount calculates to be less than \$5,000.00, the grantee can request up to \$5,000 provided it does not exceed 12% of the VCDP request. However, AM projects are limited to 8%, even if this results in an amount less than \$5,000. More than 8% may be allowed, on a case-by-case basis, provided the applicant demonstrates that a larger amount is necessary for the project.
2. Up to twelve percent of the VCDP request may be budgeted for General Administration activities for regional scattered site housing loan programs and regional small business loan programs.

Budget Considerations for Program Management

There is no Program Management activity associated with Planning Grants. Please include any budget considerations for program management in your Planning activity budget.

Other Budget Considerations:

- 10% Match Requirement: Planning Grants must include a cash or cash-in-kind contribution of goods and/or services of a flat 10% of the CDBG funds requested. All Cash-In-Kind contributions must have an associated dollar value.
- Pre-Award Costs: Applicants who receive an award may be reimbursed through the Grant Agreement for pre-award costs such as the fees charged by professionals (architects, engineers, archeologists, lawyers, etc.) in the preparation of the applications with pre-approval from VCDP staff. Such costs will not be reimbursable to applicants who do not receive an award. These costs should be clearly identified in the application.

Narrative

Priorities of the Consolidated Plan

Each project must meet at least one of the priorities indicated in the Consolidated Plan. Due to the critical and on-going need for the creation and retention of quality jobs and housing throughout Vermont, the highest priority for VCDP funding will be housing and economic development projects. In your response please speak to how your project meets the priorities in the Consolidated Plan.

Regional Needs - Housing

All housing projects will be evaluated based on the regional need and the ability of the proposed project to address that need. Applicants should review the 2015-2020 Vermont Housing Needs Assessment and respond accordingly.

Priorities of the Regional Plan

Most projects have impacts beyond the borders of the applicant municipality. Your response to this question should indicate the regional goal(s) that the project is meeting

and how the project meets the goal(s). Additionally, the implications of the project must be considered, and a written statement that the project is not at odds with the ongoing regional initiatives must be provided from the regional commission(s).

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

Please confirm with your local Regional Development Corporation that your region has an approved CEDS and that your project is consistent with it.

Project Need

Project Need is Well-Documented (e.g., studies, updated data, etc.)

1. Describe the need for this project.
 - * Back up your statement with studies, research and data. Avoid generalized statements with no substantial data or evidence.
2. Describe the manner in which the need was determined and how your project (proposal) will meet the need described in #1.
 - *Cite relevant data and attach any studies or information to support this need.

There is not more appropriate solution than the one presented.

3. a. Describe why this is the best approach to meet this need.
b. Identify other approaches that were considered and explain why they were not pursued.
 - *Clearly indicate all other alternatives that were explored and investigated as alternatives. Summarize the options and outcomes of your investigation.

All appropriate funding sources have been sought.

4. Describe the effort to obtain other funding and, why particular funding sources were considered but not pursued.
 - *Cite all other sources that have been pursued. Be sure to include any other applications that were made to other funding sources. If they were not funded, please indicate reasons and explain why other funding is not applicable to this application.
5. Explain the level of municipal government support.
 - *If the town is not providing any financial support for the project or any Cash-in-Kind services, please explain why.

How well the project meets a Consolidated Plan goal.

6. Describe how your project meets the goals of the Consolidated Plan and identify the strategies that will be employed to meet those goals.

Is the project consistent with the local Municipal Plan?

7. Provide a letter from the Municipality that tells us how this project is consistent with the Municipal Plan.

*the certification should come from a person at the municipality who has a right to act on behalf of the municipality. This could be a municipal official or chair of the planning commission.

Is the project consistent with the regional plan?

8. Upload a certification from the Regional Planning Commission that the project is consistent with the Regional Plan. Provide clarification if needed.

*the certification should come from a person at the Regional Planning Commission.

9. a. If this project is being carried out on behalf of the municipalities within your county or region, the application must include documentation of regional support.

b. Is this project on the Regional Development Corporation Priority List?

*Check in with your Regional Development Corporation on how to get on their list.

Degree of health/safety risks to beneficiaries

10. Describe how this project, if it were to be implemented, would directly address a health or safety issue for the intended beneficiaries.

*Health and safety issues include potable water supplies, eradicating homelessness and poverty, lead paint abatement, handicap accessibility, crime prevention, providing increased health and wellness services, etc. If you are unsure how to answer this question, please contact your CD Specialist.

Timing Pressures

11. Please describe, if applicable, any particular issues that make this project time sensitive.

*Please address if you have closing dates, contract with time limits, other funding that is dependent on CDBG funds, cost estimates with expiration dates, or other factors that may apply.

Project Impact

Level of beneficiary involvement in the development of the project, as appropriate

12. Describe how persons of low- and moderate- income were involved in the development of this project. How have they shown support?

* Describe any planning meetings, resident meetings, or surveys that have been done. Describe what methods of communication were used to communicate the goals of the project and how you collected input from persons of low and moderate incomes.

How well the project indirectly impacts the community and/or additional LMI people.

13. Describe the indirect impact to the community, if it were to be implemented and other LMI beneficiaries that may be indirectly served by the project.

*A housing rehab project may preserve housing for 10 existing residents (Direct Benefit) of the facility but may positively impact the community (Indirect Benefit) by retaining affordable housing in an area that has very little. The indirect benefit could also be related to neighbors and adjacent properties, future employees, generations, etc.

Project Feasibility

Readiness to start within three months of the award.

14. Please specifically identify the level of access to any land or buildings that will be required in order to complete your project as proposed; please explain when and how you expect to obtain such access.

*If the planning activities are site specific, adequate access to the site during the life of the planning grant is crucial. If the entity undertaking the planning activities does not own the site a letter from the property owner must be obtained. The letter should: a) demonstrates support for the study's scope of work, b) allows access for whatever work must be done on the property for the study, c) ensures that the property is available during the timeframe needed to complete the study so the project, if found feasible, can move to implementation, and d) provides a willingness to sell the land at the appraised value.

15. Please identify the status of commitments from each of the other funding sources; please explain when commitments are expected from each funding source.

Benefit/Timeframe Feasibility

16. There must be a reasonable expectation for achieving benefits for persons of low- and moderate income in the plan(s) developed with the use of CDBG funds were to be implemented. Explain what the anticipated benefits(s) would be and how this was determined.

17. Timetable:

- a. Provide a project timeline. Include dates the Environmental Release, permits in hand, 100% funding commitments, design completion, construction completion, etc. as well as for procurement steps including hiring, execution of contracts achieving Benefit, and any other key dates for actions to carry out this project.

- b. How was this timetable determined?

18. If the applicant community has an open PG, please explain its capacity to administer an additional PG and describe the timeline to complete the open PG.

Cost estimates are reasonably supported

19. Submit back-up documentation to support the cost shown on the Budget Forms. If supporting documentation was uploaded to the budget forms, please note this in the text box and select N/A.

20. Despite best efforts and built in contingencies, please explain how cost overruns will be covered?

*It is not enough to say that the estimates for your project are firm. Please discuss your capacity for gap financing or the availability of operating reserves.

Resolution for Grant Application

A VCDP grant must go to a municipality or municipalities. Even if an organization or agency sponsors the project and prepares the application, final authority and responsibility rests with the municipality(ies). To be certain that the legislative body understands the obligations it will assume if the application is successful, the appropriate Resolution for VCDP Grant Application Authority must be adopted by the municipality(ies), signed by the legislative body(ies) and the original(s) are uploaded to the grant application.

Public Hearing

The municipality's legislative body must hold at least one public hearing, in an ADA accessible location, to provide residents with an opportunity to learn about the proposal and an opportunity to comment. The Federal Act requires that the development of projects carried out in whole or in part with CDBG funds, must involve citizen participation, especially low- and moderate-income citizen participation.

Certification of Program Income/Unrestricted Revenue Available

Applicants that have received income from previous VCDP and/or HUD grants must include a history of such receipts for the previous three years, the current balance of such funds and what is anticipated to be received during the course of the proposed program. Describe how the funds are being used and indicate whether the funds are being committed to the proposed activities.

Option Agreement/Other Evidence of Site Control

If the planning activities are site specific, adequate access to the site during the life of the planning grant is crucial. If the entity undertaking the planning activities does not own the site a letter from the property owner must be obtained. The letter should: a) demonstrates support for the study's scope of work, b) allows access for whatever work must be done on the property for the study, c) ensures that the property is available during the timeframe needed to complete the study so the project, if found feasible, can move to implementation, and d) provides a willingness to sell the land at the appraised value.