

**Cuyahoga Falls City Council**  
**Minutes of the Community Development Committee Meeting**  
**April 1, 2012**

**Members:** Paul Colavecchio, Chair  
Carrie Snyder  
Jeff Iula

Mr. Colavecchio called the meeting to order at 6:41 p.m. All members were present.

The minutes from the November 19, 2012 Committee meeting were approved as submitted.

**Legislation Considered**

Temp. Ord. B-18

**Discussion:**

**Temp. Ord. B-18**

An ordinance approving the Community Development Block Grant Annual Action Plan for fiscal year 2013, and declaring an emergency.

Mrs. Truby stated the City is in the final year of its five-year consolidated plan. Funding will begin on July 1, 2013 and conclude on June 30, 2014. The federal allocation for 2013 will be 5% lower. The budget is \$920,786 and is divided among housing, infrastructure, economic development, and administrative activities. Housing is \$224,000 and includes home improvement loans, energy credits, exterior loans, and independent living grant, to name a few. The infrastructure budget is \$275,000, or 30%. The project slated for this category is called French Mill Run. It is an \$18 million project and includes 208 luxury loft apartments and retail space. It will be built as a hamlet. There will be a public road built as part of the project to connect State Road to Bath Road. This budgeted money will cover a portion of the road. The economic development category is allocated 30% and includes public loans used for such things as elimination of slum and blight and also brownfield activities. Administrative activities include HMIS grant and also the individual with whom the City contracts for fair housing. National guidelines require that all money must be spent for loans to moderate-income residents in the community. She added that the annual report was compiled this year.

Mr. Colavecchio stated he had spoken with Mr. Guerra, who had mentioned he had a map for French Mill Run. Mr. Guerra stated they do not yet have a final design. One of the original thoughts when the City created mixed-use areas near major intersections was to create mixed-use villages or hamlets that would have high-density housing and walkability. They knew the developer of Linden Lane was looking for property. This location would be a good location for mixed-use housing because of the bike lanes and sidewalks that are being installed as part of the State Road project. They also wanted projects bringing in more than 200 units to also have a road, which will avoid this one having to empty into a parking lot on State Road. The street is L-shaped and starts across from On-Tap, goes 500 feet west, then another 600 to 700 feet south to Bath Road. There will also be sidewalks and street trees. He is using six different types of apartment units that are more like townhouses. The Administration feels good about this project and believes it is a good opportunity for the City. It is worth using CDBG money to get a good project. It will bring 10 to 20 jobs. The project has not gone further than the planning phase. It will be going to the Planning Commission in June.

Mrs. Pyke asked about the exterior repair loans, which are grants. The total program is \$15,000, with a maximum of \$5,000 to an individual. She was concerned that amount may not be enough to meet the needs

of the public. Mrs. Truby stated as they were going through each category, they made sure the amount was at least as much or more than past years. However, if they were to run short, they could slide money from one activity to another. Ronald Messner stated \$15,000 does not sound like a lot. This program started in November and so far they have not used any of the money budgeted. More people are gravitating to home improvement loans. They can shift money within rehab activities if necessary. There is almost \$141,000 allocated to home improvement loans. This year, he did a breakdown of each program so you could see how they want to direct the money. Mrs. Pyke asked if the independent living grant was new. Mr. Messner indicated the City had one last year for a lady with a disability who needed a ramp installed in her home. Mrs. Pyke felt this was a good program with an aging population. She asked why there was a minimum of \$4,000 required. Mrs. Truby stated that last year, they talked about the types of things to install. The representative suggested that amount. However, if a resident approached them with a lower amount, they would look at doing that. With regard to French Mill Run, Mrs. Pyke asked if the road would go in before the City received a commitment. Mrs. Truby indicated it would not go in until they had a signed commitment. The total cost of the road is estimated to be \$600,000 so the City would be paying close to 50%. It would be the City's one-time investment. Mrs. Pyke asked if Council could receive a breakdown of the 80% median households. Mrs. Truby stated she would provide that to Council. Mrs. Pyke stated this is so important for the City's residents. All of the wards have homes that need things.

Mr. Walters stated if people do not know about the availability of these loans, they can find out by calling. He confirmed that money could be moved around in that category. Mrs. Truby stated the City is allowed two or three substantial plan amendments that must be approved by City Council. If everything gets utilized in one area, they would come to Council for approval to shift money. Mr. Walters asked if the developer of French Mill Run would have to put in a road regardless of whether the City pays for a portion. Mr. Guerra stated that, as an apartment development, the developer does not have to put in a road. The City wants the road in because it will help. They do not really mandate something like that through the Planning Commission. They mandated it in Manchester Falls because there was already a road network there. Mr. Walters asked if the road would change anything with the intersection. Mr. Demasi stated as far as geometrics, it does not change. It may change the timing of the signal because the additional road will relieve some of the congestion.

Mr. Walters asked what needed to be done regarding the historic preservation office. Mr. Guerra stated the City has been talking about creating a historic district since 2004. They created a historic preservation plan and guidelines in 2006 and were thinking about trying to utilize the state's historic tax credit. However, because the City did not have the historic district set up with a required review board, it could not become a certified local government through the state. You have to have all of the districts defined and have the review board set up in order to receive the tax credits. Everything is set up in the Development Code so now the information needs to be reviewed to create the districts and the board, and then apply to CLG. That may take 6 to 12 months. Once everything is in place, the City can then attract developers with the tax credits to buildings that are in the districts. Mrs. Klinger commented on the \$20,000 it will take to accomplish this. Mr. Guerra stated that \$20,000 is the maximum amount and will include creating the districts and completing the application. It is an elaborate process. The amount of \$20,000 is put in there but it may be less. They need to hire someone to do the application process, create the districts, and create defined guidelines for each district. There needs to be more specific guidelines for districts than what is in the code. Mrs. Klinger felt like that would be something that could be done internally. She is also conflicted about using CDGB money for this. Mrs. Truby stated when they originally defined the downtown districts, South Front Street was one of those districts and that project has really taken off so they are now looking at a much broader area. They also want to look at the Schwebel's project, which hasn't really gone anywhere. The City really needs to put forth an authentic committee and approval group. Once this is put together, they would be able to go after other state and federal funds as well. Mrs. Klinger understood the concept of going after additional funding, however, she was really struggling with why this couldn't be done internally. She also felt the real element driving the French Mill Project to be considered

a CDGB project was the creation of 10 or so jobs. Mr. Guerra stated the jobs would be tied to the 10,000 to 12,000 feet of retail space and also to workers in the apartment buildings. They believe the number of jobs would be more than 10. They also feel that the project will lead to other economic development in that district. It is called infrastructure but it is really economic development. The requirement is one job for every \$35,000. Mrs. Klinger did not dispute that. It just bothers her to take CDGB funds away from areas in the City that have serious housing project needs. Mr. Guerra replied they looked at that when they did Watermark and South Front Street. It is qualified for creation of jobs. The City is losing population. Things are changing and more people want to live in mixed-use areas. He understood what Mrs. Klinger was saying but pointed out they looked at other things, too. Mrs. Pyke asked if there will be a guarantee that the road will go through. Mr. Guerra indicated the site plan will include it. Mrs. Pyke asked if the brownfield revitalization was for South Front Street. Mr. Guerra stated it was primarily for that area. Mrs. Pyke commented that the Watermark project was for low to moderate units. It is difficult to swallow when the document defining French Mill Run describes those units as luxury apartments. Mrs. Truby stated the City has never maxed out a category activity. If they did, they would look at different percentages. She understands what Mrs. Pyke and Mrs. Klinger are saying, but what makes this doable is the creation of those jobs, and the fact that they can move money around as necessary to needed areas. Mrs. Pyke stated she would hold Mrs. Truby to that.

Mrs. Snyder moved to bring out B-18 with a favorable recommendation, second by Mr. Iula. Motion passed (3-0).

Meeting adjourned at 7:10 p.m.