

City of Deer Park
Public Hearing – Community Development Block Grant
Municipal Building
October 6, 2014

Mr. Berens opened the public hearing at 6:30 pm. He introduced the City's Economic Development Consultant Linda Fitzgerald.

Mrs. Fitzgerald explained that this is the first of two public hearings to discuss the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Program and potential projects for which the City of Deer Park may want to apply through this Program. A second public hearing will be held October 13, 2014 at 6:30 pm in Council Chambers. CDBG funds are federal dollars that are funneled to the County level (Hamilton County in this case) and then allocated by the County to local jurisdictions that have signed a Cooperation Agreement with the County. Applications are due to the County by November 3, 2014; approved projects are announced by the County in January 2015, and projects can begin for the 2015 program year on March 1, 2015. Funds are distributed over a three year funding cycle: 2015, 2016 and 2017. The City may request funding during any of these project years.

Mrs. Fitzgerald stated that the primary purpose of the CDBG program is to benefit low and moderate income persons. To meet this objective, all eligible projects must meet one final test before approval. The project must:

1. Benefit low or moderate income persons; or
2. Aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; or
3. Meet other community development needs having a particular urgency.

A project which benefits low or moderate income persons is one in which a majority of the users are lower income residents, i.e., the activity must be designed or located to serve those persons. This can be documented either through census tract data or through an income survey. Past projects that the City of Deer Park has implemented with CDBG funds are improvements to Hemphill Way and Dalton Avenue.

Mrs. Fitzgerald asked if the attendees had any suggestions or comments. Mr. John Applegate, Deer Park City Auditor, asked how specific must an application be to be considered. Mrs. Fitzgerald replied that the application could request funding in general areas, such as acquisition/demolition or roadway improvements. Once the grant is approved, the City could then identify specific buildings to be acquired/demolished, or roadways to be improved. She added that the proposed projects should support recommendations made in the City's Comprehensive Plan or Capital Improvement Plan.

Councilwomen Christine Hedger asked if street projects can be considered for funding through the CDBG Program, and if so, has the City identified which streets (after Redmont Ave.) are scheduled for improvement. City Engineer, Tim Casto answered that he is currently prioritizing streets for improvements.

Councilman Charles Tassell asked if there is a per capita amount that is usually awarded through the CDBG. Linda replied yes, and said that Deer Park has typically been awarded between \$75,000 to \$100,000.

Councilwoman Christine Hedger asked if the CDBG funds can be used for property acquisition. Linda Fitzgerald responded yes, as long as the acquisition meets one of the three program requirements.

Hearing no further questions, Mr. Berens closed the public hearing at 6:45pm.