

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING
MEETING MINUTES**

FEBRUARY 6, 2020

6:00 P.M.

**PORTSMOUTH CITY HALL
CONFERENCE ROOM A**

Present: Hannah Meade, Jonathan Sandberg, Judy Bunnell

Absent: Alison Hamilton, Jan Phelps

Staff: Elise Annunziata, Community Development Coordinator, Andrea Pickett,
Community Development Program Assistant

Chair Hannah Meade called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. Minutes of January 14th CAC meeting were approved.

The public hearing was opened by the Chair.

Ms. Annunziata presented an overview of the CDBG Program and Community Development work currently being undertaken in FY 20, as well as the principle strategies of the current Five Year Plan: safe affordable housing, public services-youth, public services-other, support for homeless and HIV/AIDS. Chairperson explained that the City was seeking community input for infrastructure, ADA accessibility, and public/social services needs that would be considered in the planning process for the HUD required Five Year Consolidated Plan (2021-2025) & FY 21 Annual Action Plan.

Past and present projects include:

ADA Accessibility – Discover Portsmouth ADA accessible bathroom, Gosling Meadows sidewalk repair and widening, South Meeting House, and Operation Blessing.

Facility Improvements – Gosling Meadows and Wamesit playgrounds, Greenleaf Recreation Center roof and HVAC repairs.

Public Comment for Community Needs in Five Year Consolidated Plan (2021-2025):

In attendance were: 11 members of the public, including community members who represented the following 8 organizations: Portsmouth Catholic Share Fund, Families First of the Greater Seacoast, COAST, New Frontiers Church, New Hampshire Legal Assistance, Haven, Cross Roads house, Greenleaf Rec Center (Portsmouth Housing Authority/Operation Blessing).

Conversation was participatory and each of the community members vocalized support for their missions and overlapping needs with other service agencies.

Some main categories of concern voiced by public in attendance were:

- Supportive housing (particularly for addiction recovery)
- Transportation
- Providing improved ADA access to public transit
- Sidewalk repair eligible areas and for ADA access to public transit
- Transportation to medical appointments
- School bus shelters at public housing
- Safe affordable housing (Victims of Domestic Violence)
 - How many people are fleeing domestic violence- into homelessness?
 - Overlapping needs of domestic violence survivors
- Medication and treatment costs
- Sec. 8 voucher holders are being denied access to housing (possibly due to stigma, discrimination?) Can incentives be provided?
- Other service agencies funded through the City General fund are supporting the elderly
- How to help people who are living in their cars
- Food pantries and food security
- Possible need for increased access to mental health services
- How to prioritize and manage public health issues

Additional Comment from Rad Nichols, COAST Executive Director: COAST Bus will be changing routes and times in June. COAST could work with City on public facility/transportation improvements.

Ms. Annunziata clarified the spending caps for facilities v. public services and spoke about the consolidated plan process and timeline.

After receiving no further requests for public comment, Ms. Meade closed the public hearing.

The CAC and Ms. Annunziata briefly summarized several points of the evening's conversation.

The next two meetings will consist of presentations to the CAC by public service agencies on March 10th and March 12th.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:45p.m.