



Rochester City Council

Community Development Committee

MEETING MINUTES

Laura Hainey, Chair
Harlan “Skip” Gilman
Tim Fontneau
Amy Malone
John Larochelle

Meeting Date:	Monday, April 17, 2023	
Members Present:	Laura Hainey Harlan “Skip” Gilman Amy Malone John LaRochele Tim Fontneau	Members Absent:
Staff Members Present	Kiersten Wright , Community Development Coordinator, Shanna Saunders , Planning Director for the City of Rochester, Ryan O’Connor , Senior Planner. Orton Foundation Member: Judith Hull and Sarah Lightener	

Councilor Hainey called the meeting to order at 5:30pm.

All members of the Committee were present.

PUBLIC INPUT	There was no public input.
Approval of Minutes- March 20,2023	Councilor Malone moved to approve minutes from the March meeting. Councilor LaRochele seconded the motion. All in favor, motion passed.
Orton Foundation- Community Heart and Soul	<p>Councilor Hainey opened the floor to have everyone introduce themselves and allowed Ms. Saunders the chance to introduce the Orton Foundation Members to discuss the opportunity to work with the city council members.</p> <p>Ms. Hull provided a detailed presentation to discuss the Orton Foundation’s program, Community Heart and Soul. She explained that there are 3 principles of Heart and Soul: What Matters Most? Involve Everyone and to Play the Long Game. The Community Heart and Soul Coach’s goal is not to come in with an agenda or as consultants but to help facilitate communication and work out what matters most to those within the city or town. They then use that as a jumping off point to help support long term planning.</p>

Once they find out what the residents like about their community, they work on building on those positives to help develop that “long game”. The work of the coach is to bring not just the residents together but to have them work with the city leaders to help support the shared values within each city. The citizen’s participation is just as important as the city leaders involved.

There are 4 phases to this program:

1. Imagine- build awareness, interest and commitment in all segments of the community.
2. Connect- Stories gathered from residents that identify what matters most and reflect what they love about their city.
3. Plan- residents develop action plans for the future.
4. Act- plans are officially adopted by the city and residents.

Ms. Hull gave a lot of examples of how the groups worked together in different cities throughout the county, including Biddeford Maine which is an hour outside of Rochester. Their community got together and decided to purchase the old incinerator that was within the city and tear it down. The citizens believed rewards far outweighed the risk of tearing down the plant. The town currently has \$90 million in approved projects in the pipeline including a \$50 million boutique hotel and \$15 million in affordable housing.

Ms. Saunders gave a brief overview of her experience with the group during her time in Laconia and how it benefited the city, bringing different areas of the community together to make changes that benefited everyone.

Councilor LaRochelle inquired about how they deal with individuals that are being disruptive at meetings. He gave an example of a Ward 3 meeting that was taken over by someone who wasn’t even a part of the ward. Ms. Hull explained that they would want to try prevent that beforehand and they hope to cut those people off before they get to far. Their goals are to be proactive rather than reactive.

Councilor Fontneau asked how they entice more people to joining the program. He mentioned that he finds the same people at these meetings and events. Ms. Hull explained that the first part before they start is to analyze and then connect to the different groups of people since they want to include everyone. She mentioned that the storytelling aspect helps people gain confidence to get up and talk about their story and is less intimidating than a City Council meeting.

Councilor Hainey asked about the funding for the program and how it works. Ms. Hull explained that there are matching grants to help launch the process but that there are costs to this. It could be grants, city funding or outside sources to help pay for the program. It was explained that there are “buckets” with one being for engagement (fun things to get people involved), another bucket is for the Project Coordinator which can be a volunteer, or someone who works for the city. An example was given of a town in Virginia that has a town planner and the director of a non-profit who share the role. The third bucket would be costs for the

	<p>coach which would be Ms. Hull. The coach would be there to help the process move along. Ms. Saunders asked for how much this would typically cost. Ms. Hull stated that she charges about \$5,000 per phase, with 4 phases, that would be about \$20,000. This amount is not set by the Orton Foundation and is set by the Coaches. There is a \$10,000 cash match from the Orton Foundation. Some communities have made the position imbedded so the salary can be used as the match.</p> <p>Councilor Fontneau inquired if different groups within the city, like Main Street, could work along side this group. Biddeford has worked with a lot of local groups during their time with Community Hear and Soul, and found it benefited the town to work together.</p> <p>Ms. Saunders stated that she is looking to get a vote from the Community Development Committee and the Planning Committee to present to the council. Ms. Saunders, Mr. O'Connor and the members from Community Heart and Soul provided contact information for any further questions and left to attend the Planning Committee meeting.</p> <p>Discussion about the program commenced with the Committee in agreement that the program sounds like it would benefit a community like Rochester but that they would like to see more information about the funding and how much it would work out to be. Councilor LaRochelle stated that it might be a good idea to bring the City Manager in to discuss the funding aspect, as well as maybe bring to Rotary to present the project to them. Councilor Malone stated she would reach out to the City Manager to discuss the funding and if they could bring this to Rotary and the Chamber of Commerce.</p> <p>The Committee stated they would like to meet with Ms. Saunders with the drafted amounts available before making any decisions. Ms. Wright stated she would reach out to Ms. Saunders and let her know of the committee's requests.</p>
<p>FY 24 Draft CDBG Annual Action Plan- First Review</p>	<p>Ms. Wright explained the timeline for CDBG Annual Action Plan- May Meetings, Public Hearing and June Meeting. The Timeline was updated after last meeting while Ms. Wright was reviewing the requirements for the Annual Action Plan. She has also since received an approval for a 30 day extension from HUD, making the Annual Action Plan due in June instead of May.</p> <p>First reading will be on May 2, 2023, at the City Council meeting. Second Public Comment will be on May 16, 2023, before the City Council Workshop, along with a 15 day public comment period. The second reading and adoption of the action plan will be at the June City Council meeting.</p> <p>Councilor Hainey inquired about the funding for My Friend's Place and if this was added to the budget. Ms. Wright stated information was provided for Municipal Funding suggestions to the finance department who is working on adding them into the budget. There were concerns brought up that if the funds for My Friend's Place were not accepted in</p>

	<p>the Municipal funds that the CDBG funding would have to be reallocated. Ms. Wright stated she would reach out to Finance to see where the municipal funding suggestions stand.</p>
Other Business	<p>Ms. Wright brought up the grant that Amy Lemelin from the Library is looking to apply for. It would require the city be the fiscal sponsor and is for \$500 and up to 40 books with NO match required. She would like permission to apply with the approval of the committee that if awarded the city will accept the funds and books on the Rochester Public Library's behalf. All were in favor of bringing to council for approval.</p> <p>Ms. Wright informed the Committee of her plans for the FY24 year and requested to write up some terms to be handed out to the FY24 subrecipients for CDBG funds that would include a penalty for delayed reports and invoices, including but not limited to, with holding of funds or the inability to apply for CDBG funding the following year. Ms. Wright informed the committee that there were a few groups that were late several times this year with reporting even after being given several weeks' notice of when they were due and reminders leading up to the date. The Committee agreed that this would be a good idea and gave Ms. Wright the approval to proceed in starting the updates. Ms. Wright let them council know she would have something for them to review prior to the FY24 year, along with a list of the important dates for the subrecipients (i.e.. End of the quarter dates, due dates for reporting, open application period, etc.).</p>

Fontneau motioned to adjourn at 7:11pm, Councilor LaRochelle Seconded. Motion carried unanimously. Meeting ended at 7:11pm

Next Meeting – Monday, May 15, 2023, at 6:00 p.m., Cocheco Conference Room, City Hall Annex, 33 Wakefield St.

Topics: TBD