

Town of Hampton
Board of Selectmen Public Hearing for CT Small Cities Grant Application
March 20, 2014
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A Public Hearing was held Thursday, March 20, 2014, at the Town Office Building for the purpose of soliciting public input regarding a proposed Fiscal Year 2014 Small Cities CDBG Program Grant Application to be submitted to the Connecticut Department of Housing (DOH). The proposed application will request funding to continue the Hampton Regional Housing Rehabilitation Program (HRHRP), and to discuss the progress of the FYs 2012 and 2013 Small Cities grants. It also provided an opportunity to comment on the proposed grant and the existing program, and the proposed Program Income Reuse Plan.

Present for the Board: First Selectman Allan Cahill, Selectman Chapel, and Selectman Grindle. **Staff Present:** Liz Stillman, Recording Secretary

First Selectman Cahill opened the public hearing and summarized its purpose. He introduced Pete Kenefick, of Community Opportunities Group, Inc. (COG), representing HRHRP and the Town's Small Cities Program Office. The HRHRP currently serves the towns of Hampton, Brooklyn, Chaplin, Eastford, Pomfret and Scotland. Hampton proposes to file this application jointly on behalf of these municipalities. If awarded, Hampton will be the lead administrative municipality and legal recipient of the grant.

The HRHRP assists qualifying low- and moderate-income households in these five communities with home improvements and repairs. The Town currently intends on submitting a grant application for up to \$600,000, which will be used for direct assistance, program delivery and general administrative costs. The actual amount requested will probably be less; COG is currently assessing the waiting list and developing the budget for the grant. In addition to the grant funds, the Town may also receive Program Income from prior grants that may be used to assist additional households.

Activities eligible for funding under the CT Small Cities CDBG Program include housing rehabilitation and/or support of new housing construction, economic development, public housing modernization, infrastructure and public facilities. Maximum grant award limits range from \$400,000 to \$800,000 depending on the activity category. To be eligible for funding, any proposed project must carry out at least one of three national objectives of CDBG program. Mr. Kenefick described these and the manner in which they are used to qualify a grant activity.

He said that he wanted to summarize the Town's grant activity under consideration for the FY 2014 funding round. The application is due on April 7. Because the HRHRP still has substantial waiting list, it plans to seek additional funding to continue. He referred to the informational handout, which also summarized past achievements and the status of the current grants. He expects that one of the two current grants will be complete within a month, and funds for the other one (FY13 grant) will be fully committed later this year. If the town receives the FY 2014 grant being applied for, the HRHRP may be able to continue without interruption. Even accounting for the applications that will be assisted with the FY 2013 grant, there will be many applications awaiting assistance. Also, the program usually receives at least one additional application every month. Mr. Kenefick said that he was available to respond to comments, and answer questions, from the Board and citizens.

Mr. Kenefick said that the usual maximum cap on a grant application for housing rehab is with three or more participating communities is \$600,000. Mr. Kenefick said that he believes that Hampton is one of only a few communities in the state that operates a regional housing rehab program and that it was the first one ever to do so, making it a leader.

Mr. Kenefick referred attendees to the informational handout sheet and to the income limits table. He directed attendees to see the town-by-town breakdown of assistance that the HRHRP has accomplished since its inception. He explained that the Town has received nearly

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more than \$650,000 in loan repayments over the years that have been recycled by the program to assist additional homeowners. These repayments are known as Program Income.

He said that the town needs to include a Program Income Plan in the grant application. This lays out how it expects to use income that may be earned from this and prior grants. He explained some technical matters that govern Program Income. He will be recommending that the Selectmen vote to continue to use the Program Income with the minor changes that are shown in the Plan, which was another handout.

If anyone wishes to view the FY 2013 Small Cities Program Grant Application, or the FY14 grant application's Environmental Review Record, a copy of each is will be available either at the First Selectman's office or the Small Cities Program office: 455-9132, ext.8). The FY 2014 grant application itself is not currently available as it is being written.

Adjournment: There being no further matters to discuss at this Public Hearing, First Selectman Cahill adjourned the meeting at 7:39 p.m

Respectfully submitted,

Liz Stillman
Recording Secretary