

**Community Development Advisory Committee  
(CDAC) Meeting Minutes  
Monday, March 31, 2025 – 5:30 PM**  
Lower-Level Conference Room 23 Union Street Norwich, CT  
06360

**Members Present:** Angela Duhaime, Gemma Fabris, Valerie Gambrell and Mark Marcy

Members Absent: N/A

**Others Present:** Staff: Craig Kleman and Sandra Gaitan-Brown

1. The CDAC was called to order at 5:30 PM.
2. Approval of Minutes

Upon motion made by Mark Marcy, seconded by Angela Duhaime, the committee voted to approve the draft of the 3/24/25 meeting minutes; motion carried unanimously.

3. Subrecipient Presentations

**Police-E-Bike- Community Policing Program: \$30,000.00. Presented by NPD Chief Patrick Daley.**

Gemma stated that the committee has reviewed the application. The committee would like to hear how this application would make a difference and how it would align with CDBG's mission. Chief Daley stated that ten years ago, NPD came to this committee with the proposal of Community Policing concept and received money for the community policing endeavors. The Community Policing unit was successful and well received by the community, but over time staffing declined. As part of bringing community policing back into Norwich as a separate entity, the thought is to have E-bikes for the officers. NPD has bicycles but E-bikes are a game changer, especially in Norwich, since it is a very hilly community. The thought is to have two officers patrolling downtown in days and evenings using E-bikes. The application is for ten E-bikes because officers are different sizes and have different shapes. There would be events where all ten E-bikes would be used, such as the fireworks. Also, these E-bikes would cover more distance. The idea is to base the E-bikes at the recently purchased building near Otis Library, where NPD is pursuing a police station. This way people get used to seeing the officers in the area. NPD receives a lot of complaints from that area, especially the neighborhood behind the bank: Cliff Street, Oak Street, the cemetery and the soup kitchen; people feel underserved. E-bike expenses were put in the City's budget but as of last week, they were removed. There are not many things that NPD can request from CDBG. As a result, after 14 years NPD is applying for CDBG funds. Gemma asked what are the real benefit of community policing E-bikes versus what NPD has right now such as vehicles. Chief Daley stated that by driving around a lot of the human aspect is missing. When on the bicycle officers can have a better sense of what is going on in the community. If there is a smell of a cookout for example, it is easier to stop and say hi, it is easier to meet people. People feel more comfortable approaching the officers to talk to them, fostering a better relationship between the law enforcement and community members. Gemma asked if there were specific officers assigned to community policing. The answer was yes. Gemma asked if the neighborhoods show a good response to the Community Policing Unit. Chief Daley responded Yes, they feel they are heard more and that there is a better response, better results, and they feel a better sense of representation. At some point, NPD had a lot of interactions

with the Greenville neighborhood community and ideally that relationship would be built again. Although there are budget troubles we should start filling up the community policing units again around summer. Gemma asked if there is community policing now. Chief Dailey responded no, there is a Sargent assigned now and in the summer two officers from day and two officer from nights will be added. There are people that can do it but there is no ability to do it. The service would be from 7am to 11 pm. The bikes would be off the road late Fall because of safety concerns due to weather. Mark asked if there is any specific infrastructure required for E-bikes. Chief Daley responded that they do not need three-phase electricity but they need charging. The idea is to buy an extra set of batteries. Mark asked if five E-bikes would be a benefit because the requested money from public services is much more than what the City usually receives. Chief Daley responded that anything is a benefit but the request of ten is because that is the number they need. NPD is not looking to comeback every year asking for money; it will be better to come back with a successful story. Gemma asked about the price of each E-bike. Chief Daley responded that each E-bike is about \$2,700 plus the batteries. The training cost will be absorbed by NPD.

**Martin House - Housing Advocacy & Placement: \$25,000.00. Presented by Jon Maderia.**

Jon stated that Martin House was established 43 years ago because of the need created by the closing of the Norwich State Hospital. Martin House is located at West Thames Campus and works close with Southeastern Mental Health. Martin House does in-house case management, medication case management, and residential service; about 54 people live there. The services provided by Martin House is not a duplication of any service, if these 54 people are not served by Martin House they will not have a place to live. The purpose is to build capacity as there are currently 30 people on the waiting list who are currently homeless. The facilities around the area are overwhelmed with mental health patients and they have no capacity to follow up on any patients until there is a crisis. At Martin House, patients are seen every day, which allows the staff to be aware of any issue before it turns into a crisis. Martin House is trying to do an expansion and DOH is very interested in the Martin House program, because of the way people are being served. The Housing Advocate would assist Martin House residents in the process of finding affordable housing; some of these residents work and have a vehicle. Craig asked how residents that do not have a job would be able to afford housing. Jon responded that those residents have SSDI. Jon added that Martin House also helps these folks to navigate the SS system and health care portal. Jon stated that Martin House receives support from the community and the staff and volunteers have been there for years. Jon shared with the committee stories about homeless people around town. Jon encouraged the committee to visit the Martin House's website to learn more about the organization and how funds are utilized.

**Rose City Learning Center: \$35,000.00. Presented by Kelly Ennis-Davis and Fionnuala Darby-Hudgens.**

Gemma asked to give the committee an overview of the proposal. Kelly stated that this program started in May of 2024. The founders have years of experience in public education and were frustrated because of the waiting list for English language adults education. Southeastern Connecticut is one of the fastest growing regions, the jobs are available and the people are eager to learn English and improve their life but they could not get this service; this spawned the idea of Rose City Learning Center. Last fall was the first session at Three Rivers Community College. There were about 75 students, 85% of them had high school diploma and 46 % had a bachelor's degree or higher from their native country, but they were under employed or unemployed because of their English proficiency. Kelly shared that she had a student from Ukraine with a PHD in Speech Pathology who ending up working to clean bathrooms at one of the casinos because of the language barrier. These people are eager to learn and want employment to sustain their families. 41 % of the RCLC learners are interested in the health care field. RCLC is partnered with over 30 different organizations in South Eastern CT. RCLC also has a support person to help learners to access available resources within the community. In addition, RCLC brings speakers, so the students feel

connected as many of them feel isolated. This proposal is for beginners with the possibility of learning in person and through a digital platform, the Engen app, which offers up to 120 courses. This app allows them to learn professional vocabulary to become a CNA, work in manufacturing and study for driver license among other opportunities. Kelly shared with the CDAC that RCLC is no longer at Three Rivers, it is now located at 257 Main Street in Norwich. Fionnuala shared with the committee that the community college has all the tools to help students if English is their native language but does not offer appropriate assistance for those who are not proficient in English. Three Rivers wanted to continue offering RCLC classes, but their operating costs were too high. RCLS collaborates with Three Rivers for the Workforce Development Program. The Workforce Development Program offers short courses that do not require collage level English. Craig asked if NCDC would be RCLC fiduciary, managing their funds. Kelly responded no, RCLC is a 501c3 nonprofit and administers its own grants.

4. Deliberations

The CDAC reviewed and discussed all the Public Services proposals received but did not make any final determinations as the PY51 CDBG allocation has not been released by HUD. When the allocation is announced, the CDAC will reconvene.

5. Other Business.

6. Adjournment

Motion was made by Gemma Fabris and seconded by Mark Marcy to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm. Motion carried unanimously.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandra Gaitan-Brown  
Community Development Program Assistant