



# TOWN OF WARE

## Planning & Community Development

126 Main Street, Ware, Massachusetts 01082

t. 413.967.9648 ext. 186 / f. 413.967.9642

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

Meeting Minutes from

**Monday, February 8, 2021**

Select Board Room, Town Hall

<b>CDA Members Present:</b>	Paul Opalinski, Brandy Bruso, John Carroll (remote), and Danielle Souza (remote)
<b>CDA Members Absent:</b>	James Baird
<b>Guests:</b>	Nick Peavey (PVPC)
<b>Staff Present:</b>	Rebekah Cornell, Director of Planning & Community Development

---

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIENCE

Chairman P. Opalinski called the meeting to order at 6:40 pm and led the Pledge of Allegiance.

### ADMINISTRATIVE

Approval of minutes from January 11, 2021

**Motion** by D. Sousa to approve the minutes from January 11, 2021. Seconded by B. Bruso. All in favor. Approved 4-0

### REVIEW FINANCIAL ACCOUNTS

Brief discussion and update of current CDA accounts. **Motion** by B. Bruso to accept the financials as presented. Second by J. Carrol. Approved 4-0.

### CDBG UPDATES

#### FY19

Reallocation of code enforcement funds. At this time, Town Counsel is recommending to wait to fund the engineered demolition plan for 114 Main Street. Conversations with 114 Main St owner seem to be progressing for the owner to pay for the demolition. P. Opalinski expressed concern that if this building is the only piece of equity for the LLC that owns the property, it has no value. He felt the incentive for the owner of the LLC to invest the money required for the demolition did not exist. In the end, if the owner doesn't take action this would mean the town could end up funding the demolition. It would be better to move forward with the demolition plan to keep forward progress on the Main St reconstruction. Chairman stated that the Block

Grant funds are federal funds intended to assist projects like this, as an example they were used to help fund the demo of 73 West Main St. The Director would work to determine the standing of the negotiations between counsels and the likelihood of the owner moving forward with demolition.

The public hearing for with the Selectboard regarding the demolition of 13 Parker St will be Tuesday, February 16<sup>th</sup>. J. Carroll asked if this was a historic building and if the Demolition Delay Bylaw would delay the project. The Director stated that because this was an act ordered by the Selectboard with concerns of the building's safety the demo delay would not be triggered.

Based on the quotes received for the demolition, and waiting on town counsel working on 114 Main, the funds reallocations now stands as follows: \$50,000 for the demolition on Parker Street, \$23,000 for the engineered demolition study, and \$20,000 for the streetlights project. PVPC recommended requesting the \$50,000 for demolition now and waiting on the remaining funds.

**Motion** by J. Carrol to amend the vote on the reallocation of code enforcement funds from FY19 to transfer \$50,000 for the demolition of #13 & #15 Parker St. Seconded by D. Sousa. Approved 4-0.

## **FY20**

This grant of \$800,000 will fund the reconstruction of Bank Street and Social Services. Engineering review and contracts are in progress. PVPC is waiting on DHCD and HUD. J. Carroll asked if with the reconstruction of Upper Bank Street, Lower Bank Street could use a resurfacing. He suggested asking the DPW Director if Chapter 90 funds could be used this summer and tie the whole project together.

## **FY20-CV**

Majority of funding the Domestic Violence call line this project is on track to be activated soon and job positions are posted. The Adult Literacy Project, Senior Outreach Program are both going well.

## **FY21**

N. Peavy provided an update on the interest survey with the Façade Improvement Program. A total of 31% of businesses responded and all but one responded favorably. Most would spend the entire \$10,000 of grant funds on the storefronts ranging from sign replacement, new awnings, windows and painting. A very successful project would have 25-30 participants. Adams, MA did a very successful project a few years ago and PVPC recommended starting with those design guidelines and move forward in creating guidelines for the Ware project. The Director recommended choosing a color palette – such as the town branding colors with leeway to protect originality of businesses. She will compile the information from the surveys, the WBCA Streetscapes study, and include photographs to send to the Design Center in Springfield to prepare renderings of the project. This program would be set up as a loan forgiveness program,

just as the Housing Rehab program is. So long as a business stays in the same ownership for a certain amount of time (TBD) each year a percentage of the loan will be forgiven.

N. Peavy and the Director will work on a FAQ for property owners and businesses as well as the design guidelines for the next meeting.

The Façade Improvement Program will only be a portion of the FY21 application. As always, 20% can be dedicated to social services. The remaining amount could be Housing Rehab or design. Roughly \$50,000 should be dedicated towards starting the next infrastructure project. Next street proposed for work is Cottage Street.

D. Souza gave an update for Buy Ware Now. There are four First Time Homebuyer Grants available. Average property prices for 2020 averaged at \$184,000, up from the 2019 average of \$130,000.

**Motion** by D. Sousa to adjourn the meeting. Seconded by B. Brusio. All in favor.  
Approved 4-0

Next meeting is scheduled for March 15, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

Minutes from February 8, 2021  
Respectfully submitted by,

Rebekah L. Cornell  
Director