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DEPARTMENT
OF
HOUSING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES CENTER
1430 DeKALB STREET
NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA 19404-0311

January 25, 2011

Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Development

Re: 2011 Annual Action Plan - Citizen Participation Area Meetings

Dear Program Participant:

In accordance with 24 CFR Part 91 Consolidated Submission for Community Planning and Development Programs; Final Rule, Montgomery County must develop and implement a citizen participation plan which encourages citizen participation in the following HUD sponsored federal Programs: Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG), Stewart B. McKinney Act for the Emergency Shelter Grant Program (ESG), and the Home Investment Partnerships Program (HOME). Participation is encouraged with particular emphasis on participation by persons of low and moderate income, specifically those living in slum and blighted areas and in areas where funds are proposed to be used.

The County's Citizen Participation Plan also provides for participation of residents in low and moderate income neighborhoods as defined by the local jurisdiction. Minorities and non-English speaking persons, as well as persons with disabilities are encouraged to participate. Special accommodations will be made available for any persons with special needs by contacting Denise Coletta Neuschwander, Housing Program Coordinator at the above address.

Comments will be accepted in writing at the Department of Housing and Community Development, 1430 DeKalb Street, Norristown, PA 19404-0311 or by testimony at the Citizen Participation Meetings listed below. Any individual citizen or organization submitting a written comment will receive a response from the County indicating the action that will be taken concerning the recommendation. The County proposes to conduct Area Meetings at the following locations:

1	Tuesday	February 8, 2011	6:00 p.m. at the Montgomery County Community College - West Campus 101 College Drive (Conference Room 221) South Hall, Pottstown, PA.
2	Wednesday	February 9, 2011	6:00 p.m. at the Willow Grove Annex Eastern Courthouse Annex 102 York Rd -Third (3rd) floor conference room, Willow Grove, PA.
3	Thursday	February 10, 2011	6:00 p.m. at the Montgomery County Human Services Center 1430 DeKalb Street (Conference Room A/B) in Norristown, PA. Parking will be available in the Parking Garage located in the back of the building off of Fornance Street.

In these Citizen Participation Meetings, citizens will be provided with information that will address housing and community development needs; development of proposed activities; and the review of the program objectives. During the 2011 Program Year process, citizens will also be informed of the development of the Annual Action Plan including discussions on planning and submission of the document. Citizens will be encouraged to participate in the process of developing, implementing and evaluating the Annual Action Plan and all its integral components.

The County also intends to obtain citizen views by encouraging their response to proposals made at the local township and borough meetings, and answering any questions pertaining to the CDBG Program, the ESG Program, and the HOME Program.

Please inform your local citizens of the date, time, location, and purpose of these meetings. In addition, if you are going to apply to the FY'2011 CDBG Program, ESG Program, and/or HOME Program we would request that you allot time on your agenda at a regularly advertised meeting to allow citizens to present and discuss the projects for which your municipality will apply. At the previous meeting, we suggest you announce your intent to provide this time and that it is included in any press release or formal notification of the meeting. It would also be helpful to encourage any non-profit organization, providing services to low and moderate income persons within your local jurisdiction, to participate in this area meeting.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact this office. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Kathy L. Phifer

Kathy L. Phifer
Director

Encl.

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION INFORMATION

I. Objective of Montgomery County's Housing and Community Development program:

Montgomery County has developed nine regional objectives that comply with and are generated from the three broad national objectives of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974. The three broad national objectives are: activities which benefit low and moderate income persons; activities which aid in the prevention or elimination of slums or blight; and activities designed to meet community development needs having a particular urgency.

It is the primary objective of the Montgomery County Community Development Program to develop viable urban communities, including decent housing and a suitable living environment, and expand the economic opportunities, principally for persons of low and moderate income. Specifically, the objectives set forth within Montgomery County include:

A. The elimination of slums and blight and the prevention of blighting influences and the deterioration of property and neighborhoods and community facilities of importance to the welfare of the community, principally of persons of low and moderate income;

B. The elimination of conditions which are detrimental to health, safety and public welfare, through code enforcement, demolition, interim rehabilitation assistance, and related activities;

C. The conservation and expansion of the County's housing stock in order to provide a decent home and a suitable living environment for all persons, but principally persons of low and moderate income;

D. The expansion and improvement of the quantity and quality of community services, principally for persons of low and moderate income, which are essential for sound community development and for the development of viable urban communities;

E. A more rational utilization of land and other natural resources and the better arrangement of residential, commercial, industrial, recreational and other needed activity centers;

F. The reduction of the isolation of income groups within communities and geographical areas and the promotion of an increase in the diversity and vitality of neighborhoods through the spatial de-concentration of housing opportunities for persons of lower income and the revitalization of deteriorating or deteriorated neighborhoods to attract persons of high income;

G. The restoration and preservation of properties of Special Value for historic, architectural, or aesthetic reasons;

H. The alleviation of physical and economic distress through the stimulation of private investment and community revitalization in areas with population outmigration or stagnating or declining tax base;

I. The promotion of economic development and the creation of new jobs and the retention of existing jobs, principally for persons of low and moderate income.

II. Expected expenditure of funds:

The FY-2011 CDBG Program entitlement of approximately $3.5 Million will be used for activities that will benefit persons of low and moderate income. The Housing and Community Development Department guarantees that not less than 70% of the CDBG entitlement will benefit low and moderate income county residents.

The Office of Housing and Community Development also estimates it will generate approximately $50,000 of program income. We project not less than 70% of this amount will also be used for activities that will benefit persons of low and moderate income.

The FY-2011 HOME Program entitlement of $1.3 Million housing priorities include: (1) maintaining and increasing rental assistance provided to renter households who are cost burdened; (2) increasing housing opportunities for first-time homebuyers; (3) facilitating rehabilitation of the existing housing stock for a variety of household types; (4) supporting and encouraging the provision of housing assistance and support services to the homeless, those threatened with homelessness and non-homeless persons with special needs; and (5) facilitating new construction of affordable housing.

The FY–2011 ESG Program Grant will be used for homelessness prevention. This includes; (1) the renovation, substantial rehabilitation or conversions of buildings for use as an emergency shelter; (2) essential services (including but not limited to) physical health, mental health, substance abuse, education or food; (3) homelessness prevention in the form of emergency rent, mortgage, utility or financial assistance; (4) operations, (including but not limited to) maintenance (including rent, but not staff), insurance, utilities and furnishings; and (5) administrative costs for the activities described herein.

The FY - 2011 Affordable Housing Trust Fund expects to make available approximately $1,000,000 for affordable housing. This will include a match of for the HOME program along with; (1) first-time homebuyers program, (2) lease purchase program, (3) rehabilitation and resale, (4) Tenant-Based Rental Assistance, (5) development of affordable housing units, (6) counseling for first-time homebuyers, (7) development of elderly housing units, (8) special needs population project funding, and (9) transitional housing.

III. Plan for Minimizing Displacement:

It is the policy of the County not to cause the displacement of persons from their neighborhoods or dwelling units. Community Development Block Grant activities are designed to rehabilitate and upgrade existing structures and public improvements in low and moderate income areas and are designed to enhance the living environment of the residents.

In instances where it is necessary to cause the displacement of persons from their home or neighborhood the County will provide the following assistance:

A. Referral, counseling and other assistance in locating suitable housing for displaced persons, in their own neighborhood or in one of their choice.

B. Persons displaced, as a direct result of CDBG, ESG or HOME activities would be given priority for Section 8 certificates if they meet the eligibility criteria.

C. If the displaced person is determined eligible under the Uniform Act funds for moving and related expenses and replacement housing payments for homeowners and tenants, as provided by the Uniform Act, will be made available.