Council-Manager Memo #67
Wednesday, September 8, 2010

CHARLOTTE.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Page

Information:

Neighborhood Energy Challenge Grants Awarded to Seven Neighborhoods 2-3
Urban Street Design Guidelines Recognized by FHWA and FTA 3

Attachment:

Council Follow-Up Report 3
--Road Repairs (Frazier Avenue)

INFORMATION:

Neighborhood Energy Challenge Grants Awarded to Seven Neighborhoods
Staff Resource: Daria Milburn, Neighborhood & Business Services, 704-336-2929, dmilburn@charlottenc.gov

Council members are invited to attend the Neighborhood Energy Challenge Kick-off Breakfast on Thursday, September 16 from 7:30-8:30 a.m. in Room 267.

Seven neighborhoods have been selected to receive funding through the Neighborhood Energy Challenge (NEC) Grant program. The NEC is one of 17 projects funded by the $6.5 million Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant awarded to the City by the U.S. Department of Energy. Its purpose is to engage neighborhoods in energy conservation dialogue, incite action to reduce energy use on the neighborhood scale, and affect change by equipping neighborhoods with the resources they need to lead a more energy efficient lifestyle.

While the program was originally designed to fund five neighborhoods, it was recently adjusted to accommodate funding for seven. Funds for the additional neighborhoods were reallocated from the undersubscribed Commercial Building Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grant program, which has only received one application to date.

The selected neighborhoods for funding are:

- Avenue Condos (210 N. Church Street)
- EcoDistrict (Villa Heights, Belmont, Optimist Park)
- Merry Oaks
- NoDa
- Plaza Midwood
- Spring Park (Between Harris Blvd & Eastfield Rd)
- Wilmore

The NEC grant was available to any neighborhood/homeowner association in Charlotte. Five informational pre-application workshops were conducted between May and July. These workshops were attended by over 20 neighborhoods; twelve applications were received.

A panel with representation from City staff, Wells Fargo, Duke Energy, Lowe's, the Sierra Club and United States Green Building Council reviewed the applications against criteria in four categories – Anticipated Energy Savings, Participation/Collaboration, Project Impact/Need, and Project Design.

The selected neighborhoods will receive funding in two parts. The first is a $20,000 award to fund the neighborhood's Energy Conservation Action Plan, a strategy designed by the neighborhoods that outlines their plan for making the neighborhood more energy efficient.

The second is a $60,000 award for the Household Energy Fund, a program that will focus on basic energy efficiency upgrades to homes in the neighborhood.

Funds will be disbursed as the neighborhoods complete the individual projects in their Energy Conservation Action Plans. Neighborhood & Business Services staff will be actively involved with the neighborhoods and will provide support to accomplish their goals (event promotion, implementation, engagement, etc.). Success will be measured by neighborhood participation, energy savings, and jobs created.

A formal press release with additional details will be issued on Friday, September 10.

Urban Street Design Guidelines Recognized by FHWA and FTA

Staff Resource: Danny Pleasant, CDOT, 704-336-3879, dpleasant@charlottenc.gov

Every two years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conduct their Transportation Planning Excellence Award (TPEA) Program. In 2010, the two federal agencies, in conjunction with the American Planning Association, selected the City of Charlotte's Urban Street Design Guidelines (USDG) for an Honorable Mention. Award winners and honorable mentions will be featured in an upcoming brochure to be posted on the TPEA website (www.fhwa.dot.gov/hep/awards.htm).

The TPEA Program is intended to "…recognize outstanding initiatives across the country to develop, plan, and implement innovative transportation planning practices". The City is receiving this Honorable Mention for the implementation of the USDG, which has been ongoing through CIP projects, area plans, and some conditional rezonings. The USDG, adopted by Council in 2007, are being implemented to provide a connected network of complete streets for a growing and changing city. USDG implementation will continue with updates to various local ordinances scheduled for public hearing on November 15.

At its October 4 workshop, City Council is scheduled to discuss proposed amendments to subdivision and zoning ordinances to add Urban Street Design Guidelines components.

ATTACHMENTS:

Council Follow-Up Report
(see left side table of contents for attachment)

Contents include:

- Road Repairs (Frazier Avenue)