



Established 1659
CITY OF NORWICH
Connecticut

Rehabilitation Review Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, April 14- 9 AM
Lower-level Conference Room – 23 Union Street, Norwich, CT 06360

Members Present: Rodney Bowie, Jill Zuccardy, Mark Gilot, Patricia Mullins.

Others Present: Wayne Sharkey, Office of Community Development

Absent: Chris Burger

- 1. The RRC meeting was called to order at 9:05 AM**
- 2. Introduction of New Committee Members**
- 3. Approval of 10/14/25 Minutes**

Committee members received copies of the draft minutes from the 10/14/25 meeting. Jill Zuccardy stated she had to abstain, as she was not part of the committee at that time, therefore no vote was taken due to lack of quorum for that vote.

4. Current Program Updates

Community Development Staff Provided Program Overview for new members:

The Norwich Office of Community Development currently manages three different grants: LEAD Paint Hazard Control and Healthy Homes grants, as well as the CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program, funded by the Norwich CDBG Entitlement program.

These 3 programs are all HUD funded and are used in combination, as funding becomes available, to support housing rehabilitation for the benefit of low to moderate income Norwich residents.

As described by Wayne Sharkey, the City of Norwich has benefited by a series of HUD Lead Paint Hazard Control grants for more than 20 years. In just the 5 years from 2019 through 2024, 89 properties in the city were made lead safe, eliminating the potential for lead blood poisoning in the 98 children who resided in these homes. Despite the program being managed by the city for many years, lead contamination remains a significant issue, primarily due to the great number of Norwich dwellings



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built prior to 1978, when federal laws were passed eliminating the use of lead in the manufacturing of household paint.

A brief overview of the client intake and eligibility process was provided, including a discussion of some of the types of financial documentation required of each program applicant. Wayne also described the use of Healthy Homes grant funds in combination with the Lead grant funding for projects, especially since CDBG funding is not currently available.

Wayne provided flyers used in outreach for the lead and rehabilitation programs to all attendees. The program offers a 0% interest loans, secured by liens of various lengths and terms dependent on funding source, project type and cost, and whether the property is owner-occupied or an investor-owned property.

Information was shared about the Lead Safe House, a city-owned property available for temporary owner and/or tenant relocation during lead abatement work. The availability of this property was integral to the program, not only due to the lack of hotels or efficiency apartments in Norwich suitable for temporary housing, but also as its use and value as city 'matching funds' in the 2024 HUD Lead Grant Agreement. Individuals and households relocated to the Lead Safe House are generally in residence for 3 to 6 weeks, while lead paint elimination work is being completed in their homes.

The Lead grant program also offers outreach and job training opportunities for contractors and individuals required to obtain basic certification in lead abatement practices.

Director Mullins outlined new HUD grant agreement requirements and programmatic impacts based on presidential executive orders under the current federal administration. She also noted the City of Norwich has received a FY26 HUD allocation of \$84,180 from the CDBG Entitlement program, although the future outlook for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, as well as all other HUD grant and programs, is subject to the congressional budgeting process annually. The Norwich CDBG Housing Rehabilitation Program receives approximately \$250,000 from each annual HUD CDBG allocation.

She explained that the new Norwich-HUD Agreement for CDBG programming includes an executive order requiring the use of the "SAVE System," a program designed to verify the legal immigration status of homeowners or tenants who would benefit from program assistance. Registration in the electronic SAVE system has recently been



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paused for CDBG communities by HUD, pending changes to administrative requirements.

Director Mullins also highlighted the new Lead Program contract, which secures funding for the next four years, ensuring continuity of current operations.

5. Ongoing Discussion: Updates to Department Policies and Procedures:

A discussion took place regarding the process of updating policies and procedures. Director Mullins reported that the department is continuing its work on updating the policies and procedures to ensure that all program documents accurately reflect actual operations in administration of its programs. The current policies and procedures document are outdated and in need of revision and alignment with current practices. She also expressed concern that the HUD required grievance policy should be revamped to include a 3-tier process.

Jill Zuccardy asked how long the process of redlining all of the documents might take, and Director Mullins stated that it could probably be accomplished within a couple of days, but actual edits to correct inconsistency would take longer. Jill said that she would take a look at the documents from the lens of her previous experience working on housing policy.

Director Mullins agreed and further explained the intent to streamline the client application process and, wherever possible depending on various grants requirements, provide more consistency between policies and procedures over all 3 grant programs, especially in regard to the types of loan/lien terms available to both owner-occupied applicants and investor applicants.

Wayne S. commented that due to programmatic compliance conditions, significant changes made to policies and procedures in the Lead program must be submitted to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for review and approval. He stressed the importance of ensuring that all updates comply with the requirements established by the grant.

There was general understanding that this review process could be lengthy but is necessary due to the City's longevity operating the Lead and CDBG programs (approximately 52 years) and that some operating conditions in existence when the department policies and procedures were originally drafted are no longer in effect.



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Director Mullins also emphasized the administrative challenges in tracking and releasing older liens, some of which were executed over a period of 25 years or longer. The department is in need of an automated tickler system to track liens, so that they may be released by the City at the appropriate time, and as expeditiously as possible.

6. Next Meeting and Adjournment:

The current bimonthly (every other month) meeting schedule was adopted at the 10/14/25 meeting. every other month.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on June 9 at 1:00 PM. This reflects a one-time change in the *time* of the meeting, from 9:00 am to 1:00, due to an unavoidable conflict.

A motion to adjourn was made by Jill Zuccardy, seconded by Mark Gilot, and approved by all members present.