

2025-2029 Consolidated Plan Community Outreach

Swanton on January 23, 2025, from 3:30-5:00 pm

Meeting Notes

Presenters & Staff Support: Patrick Scheld, DHCD, Ann Kroll, DHCD, Annie Decker, VCHB, Jayme Bauer, DHCD (staff support)

Attendees:

Tim Smith, Franklin County Industrial Development Corporation
Amy Redman, resident

Power Point Presentation by Patrick Scheld and Ann Kroll

Discussion:

A participant asked if DHCD only provides grants to towns and municipalities. Patrick Scheld replied that CDBG funds were only granted to municipalities but that they could subgrant funds to nonprofits and developers.

A participant inquired if a village owned property could be a good fit. Patrick Scheld said yes it could be.

Patrick Scheld said that projects like public facilities, public services, childcare, recreation centers, etc. fall under the “Strengthening Community” goal. He added that DHCD cannot fund general government operations. They can fund accessibility upgrades for government owned buildings.

A participant asked about loans versus grants. Patrick Scheld said that the Economic Development team can provide loans for the revolving loan fund, but demand is waning for the program currently.

Annie Decker added that the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board (VHCB) provides small grants to hire grant writers and administrators to allow communities to access larger pools of funds.

Tim Smith said that Regional Development Corporations (RDCs) are drafting a letter saying there is not a large enough allocation of Economic Development funds and that they would like help with making the process less cumbersome.

Ann Kroll said that proposals for projects for job retention need to demonstrate a baseline and if income surveys aren’t completed it is assumed employees are above income and would not meet the LMI threshold.. She added that proposed pay should be as close to a living wage as possible.

A participant asked federal versus state regulations. Ann Kroll said that state funds were generally more flexible. For example, the state can offer 0% interest, forgivable loans with longer terms. She emphasized that the state does not call-in loans but rather works with businesses if they are struggling. The state provides funding to partners to manage the loan programs.

Amy Redman asked if CDBG funds could be used to convert a duplex to a multi-unit with an adjacent home. Patrick Scheld replied that she would need to go through the municipality for a project like that. He added that Champlain Housing Trust (CHT) has a rental rehab program with funding and technical assistance.

The meeting adjourned at 5:00pm