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\$500,000 grant for fixing drainage

Submitted by editor on Fri, 09/07/2012 - 14:31. **Top Stories**

By Kathryn Schiliro
Managing Editor

Drainage, or lack thereof, on Madison's Burney, Mapp and Pearl streets will soon be remedied thanks to a state-issued Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to the tune of \$500,000, obtained by the city's Downtown Development Authority (DDA).

The need for drainage and street improvements on Burney, Mapp and Pearl streets, part of Madison's historic Canaan neighborhood and the DDA's Urban Redevelopment Area (URA), was identified by the DDA as a result of Town Hall meetings for neighborhood residents put on by the DDA in August and November of last year.

Drainage and street improvements to the area were "one of the top needs identified at the DDA's Town Hall meetings in that district," Monica Callahan, Madison city planning director, said in an interview last week, following notification the city had received the grant. In fact, the issue was such that the DDA initiated the CDBG process with the state's Department of Community Affairs (DCA), responsible for these grants statewide, immediately following the first meeting in August 2011.

Through the meetings the DDA learned that, when it rains, the areas around Burney, Mapp and Pearl streets - "hazardous, water-collecting areas," Callahan said - flood to the point that yards are under water, houses are being damaged and cars are forced to drive through five or six inches of water, Callahan said. Following the documentation of these complaints by residents, the grant was readied and sent to the DCA in April 2012 and the city received notification of the \$500,000 award on Friday.

"We're thrilled, and a half-million dollars is a good thing," Callahan said.

The grant will allow the city to install stormwater improvements where there have been marginal, if any, stormwater measures as well as drainage, curb and gutter repairs, Callahan said.

The DDA will work with Monroe-based Allen-Smith Consulting - the same company that helped the DDA obtain the \$300,000 grant for Town Park - on grant administration, Callahan said.

The DDA is now practically through all of the eight items on its first-year URA work plan, Callahan said.

More than \$36 million has been allocated by way of CDBGs through the DCA to support projects in 74 Georgia communities, according to a press release from the state.

The CDBG program is administered by the DCA which uses federal assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) "to support local initiatives that focus on improving living conditions and economic opportunities," according to the press release.

Printed in the September 6, 2012 edition.

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Madison awarded \$500K grant

M. Elizabeth Neal | Posted: Thursday, September 6, 2012 8:25 am

MADISON - The city of Madison has received a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) for flood and stormwater drainage improvements in the Canaan neighborhood, state officials announced last week.

The local grant is among \$36 million allocated in support of capital improvement projects in 74 Georgia communities, according to Mike Beatty, Commissioner of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The various projects across Georgia include upgrading water supplies, providing basic sewer services, flood and drainage improvements, neighborhood revitalization, health and senior citizen facilities.

Madison officials had enlisted the assistance of grant-writing firm Allen Smith of Monroe, and engineers Georgia Civil Inc., of Madison, in seeking the award.

The pre-engineering work proved to be crucial to the city's ability to obtain the grant, said Madison's senior planner, Monica Callahan. "The state wants to see projects with realistic cost projections. City Manager David Nunn authorized the pre-engineering work so we would be able to provide that in our application, and it made a big difference," she added.

Madison submitted its CDBG application in April of this year, following town hall meetings in August and November of 2011 involving the recently designated Urban Redevelopment Area, which includes the Canaan neighborhood.

"What we heard over and over again from residents at the town hall meetings is that they wanted better flood control, and stormwater drainage improvements, so water would quit pooling in their yards," Callahan said. "That became the focus of our application."

The pre-engineering plan outlines the installation of sediment traps, drainage pipes, catch basins, driveway aprons, culverts and other stormwater runoff controls along Whitehall, Mapp, Burney and Pearl streets. Construction costs are expected to total \$498,000, according to the city's CDBG application. Local matching funds are not required.

Madison's Urban Redevelopment Area Plan, adopted in May of 2011, details goals that include community improvements in areas of the city experiencing slum and blight conditions. Callahan said, adding that a CDBG grant to address stormwater conditions in the Canaan area was one of the identified improvements on the Downtown Development Authority's one-year implementation schedule.

Still pending is Madison's application for an RAS (Revitalization Area Strategy) designation in the city's Urban Redevelopment Area. That designation would allow the city to reapply for CDBG funds

on an annual basis, rather than once every three years, Callahan said. She added that the RAS designation enabled the neighboring city of Eatonton to obtain \$1.5 million in CDBG funds for stormwater drainage improvements.

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\$500,000 in drainage relief to neighborhood

Submitted by editor on Fri, 11/02/2012 - 16:42. **Top Stories**

Grant will go to Madison's Burney, Mapp, Pearl streets

By Stephanie Johns
Staff Writer

Two Madison residents attended a recent public hearing for the \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG). The money will be used for drainage improvements on Burney, Mapp and Pearl streets in the Canaan neighborhood.

The city's Downtown Development Authority (DDA) applied for the grant in April and received it in September.

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) administers the CDBG program with assistance from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Also present was the CDBG Development Team, which consists of Debra Smith and Lori Pritchett, both of Allen-Smith Consulting, Brent Allen with the DCA, Jason Brown with Georgia Civil, Inc., Madison City Accountant Karen Guinn, and Madison City Planner Monica Callahan.

There is a \$10,000 minimum cash contribution from the city that will be exceeded 17 times over, according to Smith. Smith said that money will be drawn down as it is expended.

Callahan said that the city maintains storm water out of its general fund. No city council members live in the area benefitting from the current CDBG grant but Callahan said that full disclosure prompted her to clarify that while Councilman Fred Perriman does live in the Urban Redevelopment Area (URA), he does not live in the CDBG storm water area.

Brown explained that Whitehall is part of a natural ridge where water either flows off along the north or the south.

"Whitehall is a drainage divide," he said, adding that improvements will redirect storm water to the creek basin. "No storm water will be released onto private property."

He added that the depth of standing water after a rain might lead to hydroplaning, the water damages homes, and it also causes environmental erosion.

Smith said that this project involved door-to-door surveys and identified 226 persons in the area, 210 of whom have low to moderate incomes. She added that HUD establishes the "low" and "moderate" limits.

Callahan said that this project will run concurrently with the Gilmore house project on Burney Street.

"We're trying to set up programs, services, and infrastructure," she said.

Smith said their 24-month time period expires September 2014.

"Drainage is like renovating a house," Smith said. "You go in and never know what you'll find."

Even though no housing is involved the city still is required to post "Fair Housing" documents for public viewing. They also will have to post "Section 3," which lists the closest technical colleges and workforce programs.

Smith said there will be opportunities for local people to work and added that contractors are "strongly encouraged" to hire local people first.

"This will be publically bid," she said. "Hopefully - there's no guarantee - they will hire local folks."

One resident, Michael Ross, asked about improvements along Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. He shared that when it rains the water flows down MLK.

Smith said that this CDBG project will improve the streets he drives through and explained that the streets with the "worst needs" were chosen.

She added that they did door-to-door surveys and collected stories associated with the storm water situation.

City employees took photos during downpours to document the water damage. Allen noted that the photos were "pretty significant."
Photos showed what looked like streams running across yards, small ponds forming in yards, portions of streets underwater, and damage to homes that included loosened exterior siding as well as interior water damage. Callahan suggested that Ross take photographs and write down dates to document water damage where he lives. Ross asked about getting a mapping picture similar to what was shared at the meeting to help keep records. Callahan replied that this was a very good idea and that this might be included in the November Town Hall meeting with Perriman and Councilman Michael Naples. Details of this meeting will be forthcoming. Ross then thanked the Development Team for their work. "Thank you all very much for everything," he said. "Keep up the good work."

Printed in the November 1, 2012 edition.

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Stormwater project to start in May

Submitted by editor on Thu, 12/27/2012 - 16:14. [More News & Features](#)



Madison City Planner Monica Callahan (top) addresses those gathered at the Stormwater Town Hall meeting earlier this month. There were about 20 people in attendance (above). PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE JOHNS

By Stephanie Johns
Staff Writer

April showers bring May flowers, as the saying goes. For those residing in the Canaan Neighborhood of Madison, May will “flower” with a stormwater construction project.

Work to improve stormwater drainage will begin in May, according to Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan.

Callahan shared details of the \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) during a recent Town Hall meeting. Approximately 19 people in addition to the almost half-a-dozen city representatives attended.

When it rains, water damages property and floods portions of the streets along Burney, Mapp, Pearl, and Whitehall streets.

This “highly competitive grant” takes federal money and siphons it back to the community, she said.

“We would not have gotten the money without your contributions,” she said. “We will try our best to do a really good job for your neighborhood.”

Another reason they received the grant: this area is part of the Urban Redevelopment Area (URA).

The city recently received a Revitalization Area Strategy (RAS) certification, which means that they will be able to apply for two more grants back-to-back to benefit the URA.

Callahan said they will contact those who will be directly affected during the

project and ask for easements.

"About 11 people will get calls because they are in the strategic area where pipes will go in," she said.

As to who will be employed to do the work, Callahan said there will be a bid process that encourages the project contractor to hire locally.

"We will take the lowest bids and the contractor will sign documents saying he made an effort to hire locally," she said. Those bids will be opened mid-April.

Work is set to begin in May and should be completed by mid-October.

Callahan said they are aware that other areas have water problems.

"We spent \$11,000 with engineers looking at the biggest problems," she said.

"We're tackling the biggest problem areas first."

At no time during the project will residents be prevented from accessing their homes, she said.

"You will always be able to get to your houses," she said. "You will never be required to park away from your home."

Callahan said they saw just how bad the stormwater problem is and that a solution is in sight.

"We saw firsthand just how stressed some of you were," she said. "Just be patient a few more months and then it'll be done."

Printed in the December 27, 2012 edition

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Town Hall meeting about Gilmore House draws 20-plus

Dianne | July 19, 2013 | News | No comments

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Planning Director and Downtown Development Authority Executive Director Monica Callahan speaks to those gathered at last week's Town Hall meeting about plans for the Gilmore House.

Photo by Stephanie Johns

By Stephanie Johns

Staff Writer

More than 20 people showed up for the Town Hall meeting put on by Madison last Thursday, July 11.

Planning Director and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Executive Director Monica Callahan began by thanking the Rev. Cedric Cotton of St. Paul's AME Church for their generosity in allowing them to make use of their facility for free.

She then shared details about a couple of projects going on in the Canaan neighborhood.

The first, a stormwater project, will address water that collects around residents' homes and floods portions of the streets in that area.

"We're addressing the most egregious problem first," she said.

Streets affected for this particular stormwater project include Burney, Eliza Morris, Mapp, Pearl, and White Hall, which will receive some curb and gutter work.

"We need seven easements for the current plan to work," she said, noting that they currently have one on hand. "We hope to start this fall."

Once the project has been completed, stormwater will be collected and run into underground pipes.

The second project, a 5,000 square-foot multi-use facility, will offer a variety of opportunities for residents.

Located at the Gilmore House on Burney Street, tentative floor plans call for three efficiency apartments upstairs, a community room downstairs in the back, a commercial grade kitchen and cannery, and incubator space for businesses.

"It is possible to start up small businesses in little spaces," she said.

The first floor will be handicap accessible while the apartments will be accessible by a new, exterior staircase.

A corner grocery store will go in where the pink building currently stands on the property. Callahan said, per residents' request, it will not sell alcohol.

She added that they have turned in a grant application for this project and that an interested tenant has come forward.

"This will bring groceries within walking distance," she said.

Work on the Gilmore House should begin this fall. Both the house and the corner grocery store should be ready by next spring or summer.

Next to speak were three ladies from Harvest of the Heart Garden (HHG).

HHG Co-director Deb Foster shared that HHG, a six-year-old local non-profit that grows and distributes fresh produce to those in need in the community, will "serve food and faith" to those in need.

Co-director Amanda Dalton will serve as cannery director. She shared that the cannery will be open to the public for use 10 to 12 hours per week. Hours have yet to be determined.

"With the cannery we can put up food and distribute food during times it's lean for us," she said. She added that because of the cannery they will be able to "distribute fresh food all year long."

Also, Dalton said HHG plans to offer classes on both the water bath and pressurized canning methods to "take the fear out of food preservation."

"If it's done properly, there's no reason to fear canning," she said.

Once people learn how to can, they can make use of the cannery, which will be certified by the Department of Agriculture, she said.

"You can prepare, produce, and package it right there," she said.

Both Dalton and Callahan said that in order to sell food goods, the food must be made in a Department of Agriculture-certified kitchen.

"Snellville has the closest cannery right now," Dalton said. The Gilmore House cannery will offer people the opportunity to open their own cottage industry. "It will have a low overhead. It's a great opportunity for everyone."

She shared that HHG will sell its own branded items, from tomato sauces and salsas to jams and jellies.

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Madison and Morgan County were THE highlight of the first episode of the new HGTV series "Farmhouse Life" that premiered on HGTV, Monday night, July 27. The episode is slated to air again on HGTV on Thursday, July 30 at 11 p.m. Please SHARE!
<http://www.hgtv.com/shows/farmhouse-life>



HHG Founder Jewel Hatcher said HHG is "a labor of love" and that they are 90 to 95 percent volunteer run.

She said she was excited to learn that the cannery will serve the Canaan neighborhood as Canaan means "promised land."

The same week Callahan contacted Hatcher about the cannery HHG applied for a grant.

"It was a God thing," she said, prompting an "Amen" from Cotton.

She noted that HHG grows and distributes nine tons of vegetables, or food for about 12,000 individual meals, every year.

"We've got a passion to come in here and love on you and give you fresh vegetables," she said.

HHG shared tomatoes and eggplants with those in attendance.

Sherry Terrell, Neighborhood Action Group Liaison, then encouraged those present to join the group, thereby taking an active – not reactive – role in the community: "We definitely need people to help make this successful."

She suggested each person in the room participate and get one other person to agree to participate.

"I'm excited about this," she said. "Madison has developed all around this area ... this area has not developed."

Cotton agreed: "This is better than 12 years ago. I didn't see any progress."

He added that he approached Callahan about his concerns.

"I'm pleased and impressed with the process of how things are taking shape," he said. "This will really fill in the gaps. I like what I see."

Gilmore House Update

Work on the Gilmore House should begin this fall, with the house and the corner grocery store being ready by spring or summer 2014.



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Madison City Council hears progress of stormwater project

Dianne | July 26, 2013 | News | No comments

By Nick Nunn

Staff Writer

During the City of Madison Mayor and Council called meeting on July 22, the council heard an update regarding the procurement of easements for the city's stormwater project.

According to Planning Director Monica Callahan, the city is still working to obtain easements on properties, which would allow the city to develop stormwater drainage systems, keeping streets and properties on Pearl, Eliza Morris and Mapp streets from flooding.

David Nunn, city manager, stated that the city is seeking easements from five property owners, and, as of Tuesday, only one of the five was "signed and done."

Although the council discussed the possible reservations of the property owners, including devaluation of the properties, Callahan stated that "the design of the project was specifically to go down property lines and stay outside of the building envelope to assure the maximum possible build-out for any person owning property." The city's grant allows for the compensation of the property owners who allow the easements, although, according to Nunn, the city has been able to obtain larger easements in the past with no such compensation.

"We want things to pretty much stay the way they are, but this is going to be huge improvement in the way stormwater is handled in the areas," said Nunn. "There will be a legal document defining where that drainage system is, and it is a part of the bundle of rights for that property," continued Nunn. "I thought the offers on the easements were very fair."

Council Member Joe DiLetto asked what options the city would have if these property owners continued to refuse the easements, and Attorney Joseph Reitman informed him that condemnation, or eminent domain, was a possibility.

"If this isn't a public issue, I don't know what is," stated Reitman.

Council Members Fred Perriman and Michael Naples announced that they will visit the owners of the properties in question in the hopes that they will be able to convince them to allow the easements.

The council approved an application for a pouring license at 139 E. Jefferson Street for Dana Kibbey and her restaurant Ricky D's.

According to Kibbey, who spoke at the meeting, Ricky D's will be a three-part business. The restaurant in the front of the building will be open seven days a week from lunch until dinner, while the movie theater and bar farther back in the building will only be open Thursday, Friday

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and Saturday nights. Kibbey stated that tickets will be around \$7 a piece, and that the theater will be showing documentaries, classics, foreign and art films.

Kibbey hopes Ricky D's will open sometime in September.

The council also approved an application to appoint Ashley Parker Nichols to the Greenspace Commission.

Callahan noted that there is still a vacancy for the Greenspace Commission and recommended that anyone interested apply for the seat on the commission.

Laura Butler, president of the Morgan County chapter of the NAACP, announced that a celebration will be held for Pearl High Day this Saturday, July 27.

After a luncheon in the conference room of the ChopHouse at 11:30 a.m., there will be a revealing of the "Dual Systems of Education" bicentennial marker at 1 p.m. at the site near where the Burney Street school stood.

A "grown folks" party will be held at the Pearl Burney Alumni Center, 1261 Flat Rock Road, from 8-12 p.m. Music will be sponsored by Rufus Hope, Jr.

Butler invites the public to come out and celebrate the day with them.

About Author



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The Morgan County Citizen is Madison and Morgan County, Ga.'s weekly newspaper, and sole source for accurate, hyperlocal information.

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Check out this week's Citizen C3 story on locally and family owned Farmview Market - a specialty market, butcher shop, farm-to-table cafe and an open-air farmers market! All plans are on for it to open in September 2015 and to be fully completed in 2016! Your Morgan County government is also developing a 15-acre park in conjunction with Farmview Market! Great news!

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Council awards stormwater improvement bid in Canaan

M. Elizabeth Neal lon@lakeocneenews.us | Posted: Friday, January 17, 2014 12:00 am

The Madison City Council, convening its first meeting of the year under new Mayor Fred Perriman Monday, approved a low bid of \$607,740 by Gary's Grading & Pipeline Co. of Monroe for stormwater drainage improvements in parts of the flood-prone Canaan Historic Neighborhood.

The city previously has received a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant for the bulk of the project's cost.

Three companies had submitted bids for the scope of the work, outlined by Georgia Civil engineers of Madison.

The council also voted unanimously to agree to the terms of a contract for a proposed \$100,000 state grant from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to assist in the development of the One Mile Branch Trail and connector to the Round Bowl Spring Park & Trail.

The grant, if approved, would help fund the first leg of a citywide walking trail system proposed by the city of Madison's Greenspace Commission.

In other business council members:

- Approved an alcohol pouring license for 2014 for applicant Miriam Escobar of Willy's Tex Mex Grill at 863 N. Main St.;
- Appointed former Mayor Bruce Gilbert and Melissa Piche to vacancies on the city's Cemetery Commission;
- Appointed Robert Trulock to a vacancy on the city's Greenspace Commission;
- Appointed Eric Joyce and Cynthia Reed to Madison's Historic Preservation Commission;
- Re-elected Councilmember Rick Blanton as Mayor Pro Tem for 2014.

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Housing development proposed for 5th Street

Dianne | January 24, 2014 | Front Page | No comments

By Nick Nunn staff writer

At a town hall meeting on Wednesday, Jan. 15, at St. Paul AME, A. Gregg Bayard, representative for Parallel Housing, Inc., spoke regarding a potential senior housing development off Fifth Street, which could be completed by the winter of 2016.

The development would create 40 to 45 units, providing low to moderate cost solutions for citizens 55 years old and older.

According to Bayard, the timeline for the project begins with an application by Parallel Housing for federal low-income housing tax credits.

The application comes due in June, but tax credit awards will not be announced until November or December.

If Parallel Housing receives a tax credit award for the project, they will be locked into a 30-year commitment to provide affordable housing at the proposed development.

Bayard stated that construction would begin mid-summer of 2015 and be complete by December of 2016 if the tax credits are awarded for the housing project.

Awards are granted based on the application, which will involve site plans, environmental studies, and other research, which Parallel Housing will complete by the June deadline.

Applications are scored on a set of criteria, which the judging body uses to determine tax credit grants.

Bayard said that he feels that Parallel Housing's project in Madison will rank very highly.

"It looks like we'll score very, very favorably," said Bayard. Bayard said that rentals will be based on one-year lease agreements, and that rental prices will be determined once they receive their award specifications.

Bayard added that Parallel Housing creates "highly energy efficient... sustainable housing" with average combined utility bills totaling from \$30 to \$60, and that the development will contain amenities such as an exercise room, a computer lab, an elevator, parking, and wifi throughout.

Bayard said that local sub-contractors will be used as much as possible during the construction process, and that the development will enjoy on-site management once complete.

Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan said that the Parallel Housing development will help to develop a "series of housing in town" and that the proposed development will be "low to moderate housing."

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Callahan stated that, right now, they are only taking the "first step" but they will have a "good idea of what the [development] looks like" by the time the application is submitted.

Once submitted, Parallel Housing will be committed to the plan as described in the application.

Bayard stated that this is a "very successful program" for developing this type of housing and that there will be "a lot of oversight on the compliance" with the standards set forth with the program.

Callahan added that, although Parallel Housing is a non-profit organization, the project will be taxed. "This will grow our tax base," said Callahan.

Bayard continued by saying that the project will be developed with aging in mind and no health-related restrictions will prevent tenants from being considered.

Downtown Development Authority (DDA) Chair Shandon Land asked that everyone in attendance "please spread the word" about the project, considering its benefits.

Callahan also briefly mentioned other DDA projects in the Canaan area, including the Gilmore house and the stormwater improvements.

According to Callahan, the grand for the Canaan Corner Store came in during December, and construction will begin this month on the project, which will include three "first-come, first-served" affordable housing units.

Callahan told audience members that sign-up for the units would begin that night, and that they hope to have the housing available by June.

Callahan also stated that construction on stormwater improvements in the Canaan area would begin in the next couple of weeks and continue until completion sometime in August.

"We are going to ask you to be patient until August," said Callahan, who added that, in exchange for the community's patience, "by the end of August, a lot of people will feel the next 10 inches of rain in a completely different way."

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Council signs \$600K deal

Dianne | February 28, 2014 | Front Page | No comments

By Nick Nunn staff writer

Madison City Council voted unanimously to approve and authorize the mayor to sign a contract with Gary's Grading & Pipeline Company in the amount of \$607,740 for wastewater drainage improvements in the Canaan area, pending staff and legal approval.

Madison City Manager David Nunn stated that the contract itself is "fairly typical."

The wastewater project, which will be funded by a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) will have a 150-day time frame for completion once begun.

Nunn said that work on the project will begin immediately but that the city will hold off on portions of the project until school breaks for summer, so that traffic to and from the Morgan County Middle School will be disrupted as little as possible.

"We're ready to go on this," said Nunn.

Council Member Chris Hodges expressed that the city should keep the citizens that live in the area apprised of any closures that may occur during the construction process. "We're going to work on communicating [with the public]," said Nunn in response to Hodges.

"We can put the word up." Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan stated that signs with information about the project will be put up in the next few weeks. Mayor Fred Perriman stated that the project is "going to be such an improvement" for the Canaan area and that he "can't thank the staff enough" on their contributions to the project.

Madison Finance Officer Karen Guinn informed the board that she would be receiving budget worksheets from the departments in the next few weeks and that the council will hold budget work sessions in late April and early May.

After the work sessions, there will be a public hearing before the adoption of the fiscal year 2015 budget, slated for June 9.

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She also stated that the city is working on an intergovernmental agreement with the Board of Education (BOE) to transfer the responsibility of fiscal agency for System of Care to the BOE, as well as \$63,000 in remaining funds dedicated to System of Care.

Police Chief Bill Ashburn gave a comparison of the police department's statistics during the year before and the year since he has become chief, stating that an increased amount of traffic stops and warnings have led to a decreased number of accidents in the city.

"Our officers are doing a real good job," said Ashburn.

Tripp Alsbrooks, of Alsbrooks Architects, Inc., gave the city council information on the upcoming "final build-out" of Madison's public safety building at 160 North Main Street.

The final development of the building will include the construction of an assembly area with seating for a minimum of 100 for the council's meetings, a break room, bathroom facilities, and additional space for the police department, which will eventually transfer to the building.

Alsbrooks said that there will be a second-story mezzanine of approximately 2,700 square feet for a "limited" office space and that an elevator will be constructed for access to the second story.

He also stated that a new topping slab would be poured in the area to be built out, and that the current roof will be covered with by an insulated panel system. Alsbrooks estimated that the build-out could take from seven to eight months, but that they will be "ready to send the documents out on the streets" for bids soon. Nunn stated that "the contract will be significant" but they are "doing as little as possible to the exterior" of the building.

He also said that there are funds allocated to this project from the current SPLOST as well as from the previous SPLOST.

"We have some sources of funds," said Nunn.

The city council also heard a first reading of suggested amendments to the schedule of fees, including increasing the animal boarding fee to \$5 per day from \$3 per day, separating the natural gas deposit from the water deposit so that natural gas customers may begin to get their gas deposit back after 24 months of "flawless" payments, and an increase in zoning action fees to more closely offset the cost of service involved in those actions.

Additionally, the council an amendment to change their regular meeting schedule to include a single regular meeting on the second Monday of each month at 5:30 p.m. and a work session to be held on the Friday before the first Monday of each month at 8:30 a.m.

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West Washington development gathering momentum

Dianne | March 13, 2014 | News | No comments

By Nick Nunn staff writer

Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan stated that engineering plans are ongoing for the Anchorage, a planned 34-unit residential development in the West Washington Street Gateway, which is part of the Downtown Development Authority's (DDA) Urban Redevelopment Area. According to Downtown Urban Redevelopment Area Annual Report, the Anchorage is a public-private partnership between Sandy Sanford and the DDA, which will develop "alternate housing forms for diversity in local residential housing stock and proximate downtown living."

Callahan stated that zoning has been approved for the development, and that Sanford will begin by constructing five new dwelling units, while "filling out" the existing houses. She said that the DDA will be having a first reading of the construction plans soon and anticipates that the dwellings "are going to sell like hotcakes." Callahan also recognized Sanford's willingness to work with the DDA on the project, stating that "he has been an excellent neighbor."

Callahan stated that the Community Development Block Grant for stormwater improvements in the Canaan area had been signed and was complete. The \$500,000 grant, which will provide most of the funding for the \$680,000 project, was granted in September of 2012 but was held up at the state level until recently. The project should be complete by September 2014.

She also made the DDA members aware of the April 1 deadline for applying for a separate Community Development Block Grant to promote a housing rehabilitation investment program in the Canaan neighborhood. Callahan acknowledged that there is only a "short time frame" between now and the deadline, but that completing the application is "accomplishable."

For the purpose of the program, the DDA would partner with the City of Madison, which would provide grant-writing, pre-inspection, and grant submittal assistance. The program would "address dilapidated housing conditions" in the Canaan neighborhood by selecting eight to 10 houses for rehabilitation after eligible private owners and landlords of rental properties were identified.

Callahan said part of the DDA's short-term work program includes creating literature outlining the DDA's projects and objectives in order to inform the community and possible investors about the

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DDA. DDA Member Mike Torino indicated that such literature will be useful to the DDA. He said that many people that he has spoken to about the authority do not understand what the DDA does. Callahan said that the informational material will include both the basics of what the DDA does and will "showcase" the DDA's former and current projects.

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City of Madison receives \$250,000 DOT road grant

Dianne | April 18, 2014 | News | No comments

By Nick Nunn staff writer

The Madison City Council voted unanimously to move forwards with a construction agreement between the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) and the city of Madison. The construction agreement states that the DOT will expend a maximum amount of \$225,000 in federal funds for the "off-system city-wide installation of safety elements" in the city of Madison. Madison City Manager David Nunn stated that the DOT approached Madison with the offer without the city knowing it was eligible for the construction agreement.

"I don't honestly know how we were picked," said Nunn during the Madison City Council meeting on April 14. The general work that will be undertaken as part of the project, as stated in the agreement's work plan, includes the "placement of thermoplastic roadway striping... thermoplastic roadway markings, railroad/roadway crossing improvements, and various signing on off-system streets city-wide in City of Madison." The agreement also states that a 730-day time frame for completing the process once a written notice to proceed is received by the DOT from the city. Madison will also have to submit monthly progress reports to the DOT.

City Attorney Joe Reitman said that there were minor elements of the contract that he would like to go over but that the "intent is clear" from the written document. Nunn said that a DOT representative would be coming to Madison on Friday to finalize the contract. The council also approved a memorandum of agreement between the city of Madison and the DOT concerning a \$40,000 gateway grant for the enhancement of the intersection of State Route 24 and Highway 441. Planning Director Monica Callahan said that this is the first time that an offer of a memorandum of understanding has been requested after the work had been completed, but that the memorandum must be in place before the city receives a \$40,000 reimbursement for the \$47,500 project.

The city approved of a resolution to transmit the annual update of the city's Capital Improvements Element of the comprehensive plan, which shows the growth of infrastructure in Madison. Callahan said that the update will be sent to the regional commission before being returned to the city for final approval.

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The city also approved of a resolution to transmit the Short Term Work Program (STWP) annual update to the regional commission. The update listed 29 (STWP) projects that were completed in the past year, including the acquisition of Town Park by the DDA, the repurposing of properties on West Washington, North Second and College Streets by the DDA, the drafting of a proposal for the use of the Transfer of Development Rights program, the upgrading of the low pressure natural gas distribution system within the city, and the improvement of stormwater conditions in one low to moderate income neighborhood.

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LAW ENFORCEMENT

'A lot of good, hiring jobs out there...'

Dianne | June 12, 2014 | News | No comments

By Nick Nunn staff writer

Madison Planning Director Monica Callahan discussed recent expansions of industry and commercial businesses in Madison, including Mannington and the recently opened Dairy Queen (DQ), during a town hall meeting held at St. Paul AME Church last Thursday, June 5. She also highlighted what that expansion means for workers in the Madison area, stating that there are "a lot of good, hiring jobs out there." After discussing the Mannington expansion, which will add more than 200 jobs to their current operation, Callahan also stated that Flambeau and Rema TipTop are both adding a second shift onto their current work schedule. According to Callahan, the opening of the Dairy Queen created an additional 60 jobs, approximately 55 of which were local hires.

Council Member Joe DiLetto said that the Chrysler Dealership that is now under development will house a service station and that the operation should hire from 35 to 40 employees. Callahan said that the city is "very excited that these kinds of opportunities are coming" to Madison. She also reminded those in attendance that a jobs database is available at the city's website, www.madisonga.com, and that users can sign up to have newly posted job listings sent to their personal email addresses. Callahan also discussed the ongoing stormwater project in the Canaan neighborhood, which is set to be finished in August. Although the city was granted a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant for stormwater improvements in October of 2012, Madison had to wait until they were able to acquire the necessary easements for the property, which was completed in March 2014. Callahan said that new curb and gutter has been installed on Whitehall and Mapp Streets and that Burney Street is currently under progress.

Rev. Cedric Cotton of St. Paul AME said that the work being done to ease the neighborhood's issues with stormwater flooding has been "efficient" and that the contractors have been "very cooperative" when working with the public. "I'm just excited with what I'm seeing," said Cotton. Callahan said that the city will be working to repave Terris Drive and Newman Drive using funds from the Georgia Department of Transportation's Local Maintenance and Improvement Program. Madison Mayor Fred Perriman, who was in attendance at the town hall, lamented the low turnout for the meeting, which was geared toward informing the citizens in the area of the future developments in their neighborhood. "I wish this room was full, so people would know what's going on," said Perriman.

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