

November 26, 2007

Lorraine Wareham, CDAP-RF Manager
IL Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity
620 East Adams, Mail Code: CIPS-3
Springfield, Illinois 62701

RE: Belvidere Township, Illinois CDAP Monies

Dear Ms. Wareham:

Thank you for your patience and help concerning my numerous calls to you regarding our application for unused CDAP funds held by Belvidere Township. Mr. Bob Turner, Township Supervisor informed me that the account held approximately \$52,000. Upon your approval Mr. Turner will release the funds to the Parks and Conservation Foundation for the purpose of establishing a neighborhood park within a low/mod income area of the City of Belvidere. The Foundation and with Mr. Turner's approval has authorized me to apply for the unused CDAP funds. If the funds are granted to us, a phase one site improvement will commence by late Spring 2008. Phase one will include site preparation and purchase and installation of some play equipment. Total project cost is estimated at \$150,000. Additional phases will proceed as funding is acquired. The following attachments are submitted for your review:

Attachment A - Information acquired from the IL Dept. of Commerce & Economic Opportunity shows that the subject neighborhood complies with the low/Mod income requirement at 51.7% utilizing the Year 2000 Block Group Census figures.

Attachment B - Other required information: FEMA issued floodplain map.

Attachment C – Other required information: Standard 7.5' U.S. Geological Survey Quad Topographical map with the park site, Township and Section indicated.

Attachment D – Applicant: Parks and Conservation Foundation.

Project Description

The 1.23 acre park site is owned by the Foundation. The site has been cleared of dilapidated structures and is ready for re-development as a neighborhood park. The proposed park is located within a neighborhood with high concentration of Hispanic families (**Attachment E**). Dean's Foods, a major local employer is located 1 block northeast of the site. Directly north and further west of the site are other established and vacant industrial uses. These areas fall within the future goals of the City for redevelopment through a TIF District and Brownfield's. Development of this site into a neighborhood park will complement other city redevelopment efforts and more importantly will serve the recreational needs of this low-income residential neighborhood.

Foundation Activity

1. In 2005 the Foundation employed the services of a Landscape Architect, John Cook Associates to review the site and establish a plan for redevelopment into a neighborhood park. Please see **Attachment F** for his analysis and description of proposed improvements.
2. In 2005 the Foundation submitted a rezoning request for the north half of the site to rezone from I-1 (light industrial) to D-1 (single-family) to the City of Belvidere. Rezoning by the City was approved and therefore would permit redevelopment of the site as a park. See **Attachment G** for complete details of the rezoning proposal including support documentation by the City Public Works Department, the Boone County Soil & Water Conservation District, and the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency.
3. In June 2007 a "Kick Off" event was held at the park site to inform the neighborhood residents of the proposed park, display plans, and gain resident support. The event was a tremendous success with over 150 local residents attending. See **Attachment H** news articles for more detail.
4. An Informational booth concerning the proposed park was set up by the Foundation at the Boone County Fair in August 2007. In September 2007 another booth was set up at the "Alerta Hispanic Festival" in Belvidere.
5. In October 2007 the Foundation was approached by Mr. Bob Turner, Supervisor, Belvidere Township to consider applying for unused CDAP monies held by the Township.

In closing – I hope I have provided sufficient evidence per your requirements to apply for the unused CDAP funds held by Belvidere Township. I hope I have imparted to you the dedication of our Foundation to provide a needed recreational facility for an underserved area. I hope I have convinced you that these funds will be used immediately and spent wisely. At the present time funding a small neighborhood park is difficult to achieve. Belvidere is a rapidly growing community with new schools built and referendums proposed to increase the tax rate to fund additional city services and infrastructure every year. Our traditional funding sources have dried up to provide a small neighborhood park.

Further Request: The Foundation is further requesting from the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity any additional unused funds that may be available for this project. Completion of this project will have an immediate positive impact on this neighborhood. Your kind consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,

David Sliktas, Vice-Chairman
Parks and Conservation Foundation
1-815-544-4362 dsliktas@Juno.com

611 E. 6th Street
Belvidere, IL 61008

Encl.