

UNIONVILLE CENTER FAÇADE IMPROVEMENT GRANT PROGRAM

Purpose

The Town of Farmington has allocated a portion of its STEAP grant funds for a grant program in support of façade improvement in Unionville Center. The purpose and objectives of the façade improvement program are:

To eliminate substandard or deteriorating conditions within the commercial center.

To promote reinvestment in properties located within the designated area.

To leverage government funds with private funds as part of a larger effort to encourage revitalization of the center.

To restore or improve the architectural character of commercial buildings in the center in accordance with the standards adopted by the Unionville Village Architectural Review Design Committee.

Eligible Projects

Existing buildings will be considered eligible for this program if they are located within the Unionville Center Zoning District.

Eligible Work

Eligible activities which may be financed under this grant program include the restoration and/or improvement of building facades such as doors; architectural details; repointing or repairing of masonry; paint; signs; awnings; light fixtures; restoration of the original building materials or removal of non-original materials or treatments; construction, restoration or improvement of entrances and doorways including architectural barrier removal. The above list is not meant to be exhaustive and other exterior work may be permitted provided it meets the intent and purpose of the façade improvement program and is consistent with the standards adopted by the Unionville Village Architectural Review Design Committee.

Eligible Applicants

Eligible applicants for the façade improvement program shall include the following:

Owners of buildings located within the Unionville Center Zoning District.

Tenants that occupy buildings located within the Unionville Center Zoning District provided that they have a written lease in effect which under the terms of such lease

would permit the tenant under the terms of such lease to undertake such work or where such work has been approved in writing by the owner of the building.

Prospective purchasers of buildings located within the Unionville Center Zoning District where the award of a grant is conditioned upon the closing and possession of the property.

Grant Terms and Conditions

The façade grant program will offer the following terms and amounts:

Up to 50% of the cost of work up to a maximum grant of \$25,000.00. Grant funds are disbursed to the applicant after the applicant has satisfactorily demonstrated that they have paid the first 25% of the cost of the work. The applicant and the Town must approve payment requests submitted to the applicant by the general contractor before payment is made.

The Town in its sole discretion may limit grant awards to no more than one per property or building.

Application and Award Process

The Town of Farmington will solicit for applications for this program twice within a calendar year until all funding has been expended.

The following is an overview of the application and grant approval process:

Step One: Pre-Application

Eligible applicants in the Unionville Center Zoning District are invited to submit pre-application proposals to the Town Planner's Office. The pre-application shall include the address of the project, the name and address of the property owner and applicant, and a general listing of the desired work. The pre-application will be reviewed by the Town Planner to determine if the applicant and activity is eligible under the program guidelines.

Step Two: Preliminary Design

If the applicant and activity is eligible, a committee (Grant Review Committee) from the Town (consisting of the Town Planner, Town Manager or designee and Economic Development Coordinator) shall meet with the applicant to discuss the proposal. The applicant shall have prepared a sketch design plan and cost estimate for the proposed improvements.

Step Three: Final Design Plan and Specifications

After approval of the preliminary plan and following the approval of the Unionville Village Architectural Design Review Board and the Town Plan and Zoning Commission the applicant will enter into a contract with the Town which sets forth the specifications for the work and the financial commitments of each party.

Step Four: Selection of the General Contractor

The applicant shall solicit bids for the work from licensed contractors. The applicant selects the contractor and a contract for the work shall be executed by between such contractor and the applicant. The applicant is not required to take the low bidder on the contract, but the town reserves the right to request that the low bidder be selected or other estimates be obtained if there is a wide disparity between the estimates.

Step Five: Grant Agreement

The applicant and town will sign a Façade Improvement Grant Agreement committing funds to the project. Once signed the applicant can begin work on the project.

Selection Criteria

Applications will be reviewed upon their receipt. When multiple projects are under review the grant committee will make the selections based on the following:

- a. Economic Impact: the degree to which the façade improvements will leverage other investment such as new tenants; other property improvements or upgrades; value of the improvements.
- b. Visual Impact: the degree to which the façade improvements will improve the aesthetics of the building and immediately surrounding area and streetscape.
- c. Historical Merit: The degree to which the façade improvements will restore the original architectural integrity and proportions of the building, relative to the extent to which these architectural values were lost due to inappropriate remodeling or neglect.
- d. Matching Funds and Timelines: the degree to which the applicant can guarantee that they will have matching funds available and will proceed in an expeditious manner with the project.

General Conditions and Requirements

In addition to the above criteria the program is subject to the following limits and conditions:

- a. The committee at their discretion may reject applications for individual storefronts in multi-tenant buildings.
- b. Any proposed changes to the work approved in the grant agreement must be submitted to the Town for review and approval. The applicant must pay for any changes other than for unforeseen conditions.

- c. All façade work and grant applications must be approved by the Grant Review Committee.
- d. All façade work shall be completed in a time frame as indicated in the signed agreement unless extended by the Committee.
- e. No grants shall be awarded to applicants who have outstanding debts to the Town including fees, fines, utility bills or property taxes. No grants shall be awarded to an applicant who has outstanding building or fire code or zoning violations on the property.
- f. Grants shall not be used for interior work unless it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Committee that such work is directly related to the façade work.