



Onondaga County Legislature

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Clerk

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Chairman

TAMMY BARBER
Deputy Clerk

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PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES – MAY 17, 2023 TIMOTHY BURTIS, CHAIR

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mr. Olson, *Mr. Knapp
MEMBERS ABSENT: Ms. Kuhn, Mr. Garland
ALSO ATTENDING: Chairman Rowley; also see attached

Chair Burtis called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. *The minutes of the previous meeting had been distributed, and there were no objections to waiving the reading. There were no corrections to the minutes, and the minutes were approved.*

Chair Burtis took items out of order

3. **GREATER SYRACUSE LAND BANK:** Katelyn Wright, Executive Director a. **INFORMATIONAL: Annual Report**

- 2022 Annual Report on file with the Clerk
- The Land Bank is a public authority jointly established by the City and County to acquire vacant and abandoned properties and facilitate their return to productive use
- State law requires annual reporting from the past year on:
 - Projects undertaken
 - Money spent
 - Administrative activities of the Land Bank
- Highlights:
 - Sold fewer properties; receiving fewer foreclosures from the city
 - Condition of buildings available for sale is not as great as it used to be
 - More difficult to move properties
- Primary business model has been to sell fixer uppers
 - Buyers in construction trades do well
 - Buyers hiring a GC (General Contractor) find it difficult
- Excited for city's RNI (Resurgent Neighborhoods Initiative) of building new housing
- Shovel ready sites are ready for build resulting in move-in ready product on the market
 - Will solve problem of buyer renovation struggles
 - Free of lead paint hazards and asbestos
- County is planning to build 10 homes on Furman and Kennedy Streets
 - 5 will be single family sold to owner/occupant
 - 5 will be two family for long-term affordable rentals
 - Fits in to new model of putting new housing stock on the market
- Building Stabilization is a new program; utilizes ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) funds for:
 - New roofs, siding, windows, doors, repairing foundations and framing
 - Will provide a good looking, water tight shell that can be turned over for a buyer to finish interior
 - Makes it easier and cheaper for potential buyer
 - Provides immediate gratification to neighbors
 - 19 Building Stabilization projects were done last year using ARPA

- Recently awarded \$1.8M from NYS Department of Homes and Community Renewal
 - Will be able to do ~ 40 demolitions and 9 or 10 stabilizations

Questions/Comments from Committee:

- Do you find it difficult to get people to do the work?
 - More attractive than a complete fixer upper and moves faster than those that have been partially stabilized
- Demolition candidates are down from previous years, what does it look like in the future?
 - Did a record number of demolitions last year; 94 in calendar year
 - Largely due to financial support from city with ARPA funds
 - Been willing to take title to abandoned properties even if demolition funds are not available for the coming year
 - Having site control means shovel ready projects when applying for grants
- *Mr. Knapp arrived at the meeting
 - Syracuse received more grant money than any other Land Bank in NYS, because of shovel ready projects; which means 200-300 demolition projects backed up
 - ARPA money from the city allowed for catch up; first time in many years there are less than 100 demolition candidates in inventory
 - ~ 30% of structures are demolition candidates; has held steady over the last 10 years
- Is there ability to apply for money in other areas with Micron coming in (development fund)?
 - Have not seen detailed information released
 - Knowing there is money available for housing related projects, optimistic there is something that can be applied for
- Any idea how many properties you have now?
 - ~ 900 in inventory; 500-600 of those are vacant lots
 - Have fewer structures now; proportion is moving more and more toward vacant lots
- Out of the 400 structures, how many will be vacant lots?
 - ~100 of them are demolition candidates; others can be renovated
- Right now there is about 300, with the right person and the right program?
 - Yes
 - Many are under contract but have not closed
- As far as net income, able to get in the black for 2021?
 - Breaking even 2 years in a row; largely due to financial support from city and county
 - Past 2 years, city has provided \$750k to be used for property maintenance expenses
 - County has provided \$250k available for flexible uses
- What would you say to the sceptics that say “we should not be doing this, we should let private industry take care of this”? Can you remind us why that does not work?
 - Not taking opportunities away from private industry or investors; making it a more rational market
 - Both parties are better informed than in auction
 - Broader pool of buyers; auction only has cash buyers
 - Vast majority of properties are going to private local investors
 - Small percentage of sales each year go to Home Headquarters, Housing Visions, and those that the county is building
- The struggle is that there are too many questions; too much of a Pandora’s Box for people to walk into and be able to give a high bid. Need to leave room in the deal because of the unknown. Need to bridge a gap to allow a more earnest bid that reflects the property better by giving them access and opportunity. Some are construction wise, otherwise, Skeptical on what you are getting and leave a lot of room compared to how much is paid.
 - Dealing with Brownfield properties over the past few years
 - Spent down a \$600k grant from EPA for Brownfield assessment; been able to do phase 1 and 2 on tax foreclosed properties
 - Mostly former auto repair shops, gas stations, more recently a dry cleaner
 - When testing is done, property can be listed with unknowns removed

- Potential buyer will know exactly what is needed is regards to environmental remediation
- Few are contaminated and will apply for cleanup funds
- Land Bank created to take away unknowns, reposition properties to make them attractive for private investment

1. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Martin Skahen, Director

a. Authorizing the Onondaga County Executive to File the 2023 Action Plan for the Community Development Block Grant, Home Grant and Emergency Solutions Grant Programs (\$3,267,206)

- Entitlement grants are non-competitive grants received from Housing and Urban Development based on various economic and population factors
- Entitlement grants are received in 3 forms:
 - Community Development Block Grant
 - Home Grant
 - Emergency Solutions Grant

2023 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BUDGET-FINAL

5/11/2023

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT GRANT	2022	2023	
County	\$1,929,511	\$ 1,962,532	1.7%
Clay	\$266,774	\$ 303,603	13.8%
Total Grant	\$2,196,285	\$ 2,266,135	3.2%
Reprogrammed Balances			
Program Income	103,719	\$ 107,310	
Total Available	\$2,300,004	\$ 2,373,445	
Capital Projects	\$752,028	\$ 815,218	
Housing Rehabilitation	350,000	\$ 350,000	
Housing Rehab (Prog Income)			
Commercial Rehabilitation	\$150,000	\$ 150,000	
Rehab Delivery	450,000	\$ 450,000	
Administration	439,257	\$ 453,227	
Housing Counseling	5,000	\$ 5,000	
Fair Housing	\$50,000	\$ 50,000	
Homeownership (Prog Income)	103,719	\$ 100,000	
Contingency	0	\$ -	
Total	\$2,300,004	\$ 2,373,445	
CDBG FLOAT LOAN			
Home Ownership Activities			
HOME GRANT	\$720,844	\$ 731,487	1.5%
Housing Rehabilitation	540,633	\$ 548,615	
Lead ->2014; 2015->Shape-Up	0	\$ -	
Home Ownership Subsidies	0	\$ -	
Non-Profit Housing Activities	108,127	\$ 109,723	
Administration	72,084	\$ 73,149	
Total	\$720,844	\$ 731,487	
EMERGENCY SOLUTIONS GRANT	\$175,607	\$ 169,584	-3.4%
Administration	13,171	\$ 12,719	
Projects	\$162,436	\$ 156,865	
Total	\$175,607	\$ 169,584	
TotalGrant Application	\$3,196,455	\$ 3,274,516	

- County and Clay are broken out because Clay receives their own entitlement grant
 - County takes 10% for Admin.; remainder goes to their town and village of North Syracuse for projects
- Cannot figure out why percentage went up for Clay; many factors go into it
- Capital Projects line is where all municipal projects in towns and villages are funded
 - \$815,218 budgeted, removing Clay’s portion leaves \$534,665 for the remainder of county

- Clay’s portion is 34% of overall allocation; has happened for the last 3 years
- Prior to that time, Clay’s portion went into full county portion; competed like everyone else
 - During that time, had a limit of \$50k per project application
 - For approximately 5 years, applicants could apply for \$50k or up to \$150k
 - Beginning current year, no longer offering the \$150k option due to Clay’s large portion
 - Have enough \$50k applications to fund many municipalities; reflected in recommended awards
- Home Grant went up 1.5%
- Emergency Solutions Grant went down 3.4%

**2023 Community Development
Capital Projects-Approved**

No.	Municipality/Agency	Project	Req CDBG	Match	Project Total	Funded
1	Town-Camillus	Shove Park Phase III	\$ 39,000	\$ 13,000	\$ 52,000	\$ 39,000
4	Town-Clay	Fairways Park Playground	\$ 46,026	\$ 15,342	\$ 61,368	\$ 46,026
5	Town-Clay	Meltzer Park Playground	\$ 90,166	\$ 30,055	\$ 120,221	\$ 90,166
6	Town-Clay	Crown Road - repaving	\$ 50,000	\$ 68,077	\$ 118,077	\$ 50,000
7	Town-Dewitt	Kinne St Sidewalks	\$ 50,000	\$ 109,000	\$ 159,000	\$ 50,000
10	Town-Fabius	South Street paving	\$ 50,000	\$ 17,000	\$ 67,000	\$ 50,000
12	Town-LaFayette	Stafford Park Restroom Rehabilitation/Pavillion	\$ 60,000	\$ 20,000	\$ 80,000	\$ 60,000
13	Town-Lysander	McLane Resurfacing	\$ 50,000	\$ 48,400	\$ 98,400	\$ 50,000
15	Town-Onondaga	Kelley Brothers/Anthony Santaro Park Improvements & Snr Cnt	\$ 50,000	\$ 12,500	\$ 62,500	\$ 50,000
17	Town-Van Buren	Snowdale Park Improvements	\$ 50,000	\$ 17,500	\$ 67,500	\$ 50,000
18	Village-Camillus	Sidewalk North St	\$ 43,000	\$ 14,400	\$ 57,400	\$ 43,000
20	Village-Baldwinsville	McHarrie Park	\$ 25,975	\$ 8,659	\$ 34,634	\$ 25,975
21	Village-Jordan	Erie Canal West Lighting	\$ 24,000	\$ 9,000	\$ 33,000	\$ 24,000
23	Village-Minoa	Sidewalk replacement	\$ 50,000	\$ 8,146	\$ 58,146	\$ 50,000
26	Village-N Syr	Heritage Park Improvement plus	\$ 87,051	\$ 41,374	\$ 128,425	\$ 87,051
30	Village-Solvay	Charles Avenue Park Playground	\$ 50,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 90,000	\$ 50,000
Municipality Total:			\$ 815,218	\$ 472,453	\$ 1,287,671	\$ 815,218

Fair Housing

1	ARISE, Inc	ARISE Housing Referral & Advocacy Program	\$ 12,659	\$ 50,635	\$ 63,294
2	CNY Fair Housing, Inc	Fair Housing Education & Enforcement	\$ 50,000	\$ 111,000	\$ 161,000
Fair Housing Total:			\$ 62,659	\$ 161,635	\$ 224,294
Requested Total			\$ 877,877	\$ 634,088	\$ 1,511,965
Town Clay	Allocated Funding		\$306,603	\$30,660	\$275,943

- Village of North Syracuse Town Supervisor approved additional money for Heritage park
- Able to fund a project to every municipality except:
 - Town of Geddes - they have not spent two \$50k grants; Lakeland Park from 2021 and Carno Senior Center from 2020
 - Town of Salina and Village of Manlius - only submitted a \$150k application; not \$50k
 - Cornell Cooperative Extension – have 1 ½ years’ worth of grants not spent
 - Lack of spending has been a recurring problem
 - Will be meeting with Cornell Cooperative to discuss whether or not to continue in program
 - Town of Cicero – Applied for Senior Center; asked them to apply through the Senior Center Grant Program

Comments from Committee:

- Thank you, very nice working with you and your staff. Great communication and thoroughness. Good working relationship. Other villages appreciate all the work.
- It is a good process; great job

A motion was made by Mr. Knapp, seconded by Mr. Olson, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

2. SYRACUSE/ONONDAGA COUNTY PLANNING AGENCY (SOCPA): Dan Kwasnowski, Director
a. A Local Law Amending the Onondaga County Charter and Onondaga County Administrative Code to Establish a Department of Planning

- Process began last Fall when a key position left the city Zoning office
- Mayor Walsh suggested looking for solutions with the county for providing zoning administration services in the city
 - City will take over the function of administering zoning; hire new staff
 - County will continue long range planning services
- County and city both need a Director of Planning
 - Current Assistant Director of City Planning to come on board with city Zoning as Deputy Commissioner focusing on long-range planning for the city
 - Director of Planning will be able to designate 100% of time to county
 - Director of Planning has been acting as Zoning administrator
 - Purposely left 2 planning positions open on zoning side knowing the need to absorb people
- City budget kicks in July 1
- Rezone will presumably be adopted June 7th
- Clean break; hire new people, new office space, new system
- Could be a leading example of what modern communities can do as far as development processes and approval

Comment from Mr. Yaus

- No personnel component; no change in office

Questions/Comments from Committee:

- No personnel change because of the unfilled positions and work done?
 - Yes
- The city contingent will move to own office space?
 - A couple employees are still in City Hall Commons because 100% of work done is with the county
 - Zoning function has already moved to Carnegie building
- The city requested this?
 - Yes
- A lot going on with County and City;
- Thank you for explaining the July 1st date
- From a payroll standpoint, on July 1st, the county's is the county's and the city's is the city's? No more reimbursement for salaries?
 - Correct

Comment from Mr. Yaus

- Part of this is authorizing an agreement that would clarify one Planner II position; also has ability to contract, per separate agreement, a separate rate for zoning and other services
- County is able to assist, on a contract basis, for a negotiated fee for additional services

A motion was made by Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

b. Calling for a Public Hearing on the Adoption of the Onondaga County Comprehensive Plan, Plan Onondaga (July 5, 2023 at 12:55 p.m.)

- Draft of the County Comprehensive Plan, Plan Onondaga is complete
 - Plan Onondaga can be viewed or downloaded online at ongov.net

- Asking to authorize a public hearing for adoption (July 5th) of the Onondaga County Comprehensive Plan, Plan Onondaga
- Will present the Plan to the Legislature next month
- Plan compares Onondaga county to other counties nationally
- Implementation and vision section shows integration of land bases and how they play together
- Very careful not commit resources in the Plan

Comment from Mr. Yaus

- Plan does not commit to any action

Comments from Committee:

- Themes are there; nice to see the county’s bottom up approach
- Mr. Kwasnowski did a listening tour throughout the county; towns appreciated the effort and felt heard; had input
- Bottom up approach was exactly what was needed to get buy-in from communities; nice job

A motion was made by Mr. Olson, seconded by Mr. Knapp, to approve this item. Passed unanimously; MOTION CARRIED.

Comment from Committee:

- Mr. Kwasnowski and his team do a wonderful job helping out with the Ag Council; put in a lot of time, work and personal, making it a big success; Thank you to Mr. Kwasnowski and whole crew for their work

The meeting was adjourned at 9:42 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Tammy Barber

TAMMY BARBER, Deputy Clerk
Onondaga County Legislature

ATTENDANCE

COMMITTEE: PLANNING & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE: MAY 17, 2023

NAME (Please Print)	DEPARTMENT/AGENCY
Mike LaPlar	Comm Dup
Kristi Sanel	Financ
DINAE WARD	T-WANCE
Michael Collins	NBD / City
Luke Avey-Dougherty	Land Bank
Katelyn Wright	Land Bank
Dan Kwasnowski	SOCRA
Mark Schem	Community Developm
Sharon Owens	City of Syr.
Darcie Lermack	Leg
Jim Beebe	Leg
JM Blum	CE
Tim Frakeschi	Legal Counsel 1
John Desantis	Leg