

Minutes

Housing Committee
Monday, May 16, 2011
6:45 p.m.

Police Training Room, 4th Floor
Municipal Building, Jamestown, New York

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Paul Whitford, Steve Szwejbka and Michael Taylor

OTHERS PRESENT: Council President Greg Rabb, REIA Representative John Noe

Chairman Whitford called the meeting to order.

The minutes from the April 11, 2011 meeting were approved.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UPDATE – NEIGHBORHOOD INITIATIVES

Mr. Whitford: There were actually four applications for the cluster competition. Three of them were in the North Side Pride area and one was from the West side. The curb appeal is in the planning stages and they're going to have a "best garden competition" with nominations in June and the nominations will be submitted by residents. You can actually nominate your own property and that's the aesthetics, the landscaping, flowers and bushes. Then they're going to set up a panel of volunteers to judge and they'll be selected through the community – Jamestown residents – and then they'll have an awards ceremony and that'll probably be announced the following month after the judges complete their work. They're going to get some communications on it either in the media and Council on how the nomination process goes and all the residents are eligible and they're looking for some help as far as the awards that will be presented. Also, there's going to be two workshops coming up in June. One is June 16th from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. in the Renaissance Center and that workshop will be on High Value Improvements of property and there'll be some information about financing that might be available. COI will be conducting that workshop. The name of it again is High Value Improvement. In other words, things like putting a second bathroom in your house or extending your driveway and different things like that.

The second one actually will be an Exterior Painting Clinic. It's amazing how many people don't prep the house properly and do the right things before they paint a house. Some houses certainly require a primer and they're going to be...Everyday's True Value is going to actually put that one on. The date is June 23rd at the Renaissance Center – both of these are at the Renaissance Center – from 6:30 to 8:00 P.M. and the public is certainly invited. In fact, this is for the residents. I think that we'll also provide some information in that one on...some of the residents that aren't actually physically able to paint their houses and they need help financially or labor wise and at this point they're trying to set up a volunteer group that will help with some of those things. That's about it. I'll try and keep everybody up to date on it.

I did want to mention that I went to the workshop on Neighborhood Forests. It was just much, much more than what I had expected. The information that you receive and the passion that they showed. Dan Stone who is the City Arborist and how huge the scope that their job is. It isn't just the parks. It's every tree in the City of Jamestown that they deal with and the responsibility of all the trees on City property, terraces and parks that they have to maintain with minimum staffing. It is a difficult job, but you can sense the passion that they have in doing it. They like the job; they really know about the trees and the value of the trees. Some things that I learned that I really didn't know, even as a councilman and a resident that we are the second longest tree city, U.S.A. Thirty years. Number 1 - I don't know - it's a little town - it's in New York - about mid-state. Then we're number one as far as tree campus U.S.A. It's our second year. They have 767 trees they planted on three campuses. They're the first campus to receive the recognition and they estimate the value of the trees that they planted at \$1,095,385.00. So you know, you learn things about trees that you really don't think about all the time - the aesthetics, the wind control, noise abatement - I mean they've got much more value than just aesthetics and they explained how much they improve the air and water quality too. They cost approximately \$250-600.00 for the first three years and the value over a lifetime is over \$90,000 - what they give back to the community. I'm not so sure about this, but they actually increase the value of property 20% over houses who don't have trees around them. I don't know how...they must have done a study on that, but I don't know about 20% but I would imagine they do...that's one thing you look for when you purchase a new home. That's all I have. We have anything under Old Business? New Business?

Mr. Noe: When is the next meeting here? Will it be before these two - the 16th and the 23rd, or not?

Mr. Whitford: That's what I'm trying to...

Mr. Olson: We don't meet the 30th because that's a holiday. We'll meet after that - whatever the meetings are in June...

Mr. Whitford: Okay. We'll probably...yes...if I have something for the Agenda, but it's certainly won't be this. Hopefully, they'll get this out on the radio and in the newspaper to generate some more activity. The Neighborhood Forests Workshop - there were only about 8 in attendance, but a lot of people don't know about it or it was during the day -10-noon - and a lot of people are either working or busy. This one's going to be in the evening so I think it'll be a little easier for the residents to attend. I would think that the 13th would be better - it'll give us an opportunity to see how the Neighborhood Cluster Competition was going on and I want to find out more of what those groups are doing.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

James N. Olson
Director of Financial Services/City Clerk