

HOUSING COMMITTEE
Mayors Conference Room
July 15, 2004

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairperson Carolyn Bloomquist and Council Members James Ventura and A. John Calamunci

MEMBERS EXCUSED: Council Member James McElrath

OTHERS PRESENT: City Clerk Shirley A. Sanfilippo, Lt. Robert Samuelson, Corporation Counsel Marilyn Fiore-Nieves, Director of Development Steven Centi, Housing Inspector Greg Moran, Housing Inspector Bob Weeks, Fire Inspector David Crossley, Brooke Buesink of Cable 8 News,

Chairperson Bloomquist called the meeting to order.

Mr. Centi reviewed the 1996 agreement between Chautauqua County and the City of Jamestown for the collection and enforcement of City real property taxes. He advised that a meeting has been scheduled for July 23, 2004 between the parties to discuss the agreement. He will report back to the Committee after the meeting.

Mr. Weeks explained how their department used Sections 215-52 and 292.3 of the City Code and distributed copies of the notice that was given for cars that were to be towed. He suggested that Section 292.1 be amended to add the language "the vehicle is stored in a garage or other completely enclosed building" in order to incorporate the wishes of the Committee. Mr. Moran noted that approximately 50% of the vehicles that had been noted have been voluntarily removed.

Chairperson Bloomquist asked the Corporation Counsel if they could employ blanket enforcement. She responded, yes; however, it could still be challenged and there was a problem with the lack of staff to pursue this. Mr. Moran advised that the code enforcement officers must cite all violations noticed, not just one. Mr. Centi explained that other things get put aside when they are inundated with specific complaints.

The Committee discussed progressive fines for housing code violations. The suggestion was made that the City Council could pass a resolution encouraging the judge to impose higher fines for repeat offenders. Councilman Calamunci stated that he would rather see that people who are trying to keep up their homes have the ability to use their money for repairs rather than paying court fines. He was opposed to setting limits on the fines and felt it was better to let the judge make the decision.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Shirley A. Sanfilippo, MMC, RMC
City Clerk