

Housing Committee
June 23, 2025
6:30 p.m.
Police Training Room
Municipal Building, Jamestown, New York

MEMBERS PRESENT: Councilman Reynolds, Councilman Sheldon

MEMBERS ABSENT: Councilwoman Brackman

OTHERS PRESENT: City Clerk Jennifer R. John, Director of Development Crystal Surdyk, Council President Dolce, Councilman Daversa, Councilman Paterniti

Councilman Reynolds called the meeting to order.

Opportunities for Public Comment

Margaret Connelly of 214 Fulton Street, Jamestown asked what the plan is for her neighborhood. What does the department intend to do in terms of garbage, junk and debris and demolitions.

Ms. Surdyk noted that several houses in the area are set for demolition. Two have gone out to bid and will be taken down within the new few weeks with a couple more to follow. The department is actively working on the neighborhood and is seeking funding for a neighborhood revisitation grant.

Informational/Report

Members of the Department of Development will be attending a session with ESD (Empire State Development) on Wednesday, June 25, 2025 to gain more information regarding the Consolidated Funding Applications. They are working on final details and are currently looking at a feasibility study for the Furniture Mark Building and a pro housing application to help move projects along. This would help with targeted redevelopment of vacant lots, site preparation, etc. They are trying to narrow the scope of the project to Fulton Street and Cross Street, as they are in need of significant rehabilitation and infill. Both neighborhoods are in need of infrastructure upgrades as well. They are looking to take a wholistic approach to both neighborhoods. The applications are due by the end of July. A lot of data and estimates are needed in order to move forward with the application. Jamestown is already a pro housing community, so that improves our chances of getting funding. \$100 million dollars is in the fund, that will be awarded to many communities.

President Dolce asked about the activity on Fulton and Strong Streets. Ms. Surdyk noted that there are demolitions currently underway as well as curb cuts, and gutters. It is a small infrastructure project. The Landbank properties scheduled for demolitions will have the brush and trees cut back.

A developer will be coming later in July to tour the Furniture Mart Building and some other sites. The department is going back to the drawing board from a feasibility standpoint to determine the right fit. Maybe housing is not the right fit for the Furniture Mart Building area. The city needs a conference center. The hope is that with the state's help, a consultant could be hired to take a deeper dive into the project.

Councilman Reynolds asked about the Local Law, which is required by New York State. Corporation Counsel Raimondo will speak to it during the full work session. Nothing substantial will change, it just basically is keeping up with code changes. Following the presentation of the Local Law, a twenty-day public comment period will begin, followed by a public hearing, which will most likely take place before the July voting session.

The Department of State created a Department of Monitoring in 2020. The Department of Development has had two cases in which individuals reported their displeasure with the way code enforcement was handled. Both of the cases were from before any of the existing team was employed by the City of Jamestown. Both complaints were investigated and determined to be unfounded. While conducting the investigation, the Department of Monitoring identified that the Jamestown City Code had not been updated locally, when it was changed at the state level. Now that the oversight has been identified, clarifying language needs to be added. The changes were in process, but never completed. The changes have already been adopted at the state level; this is just a formality for the city. The laws are currently being followed.

Councilman Reynolds would like for Aili Makuch to attend a Housing Committee meeting and full Work Session to describe her job and the projects she is working on. Plans will be made for her to attend in the near future.

Ms. Surdyk reminded the committee that the Department of Development is working on the five-year Consolidated Action Plan. This will go before the City Council to vote on during the June 30, 2025 Voting Session. The public comment period will be open through July 10, 2025 with the submission in mid-July. Comments can be submitted online or through email. Surveys continue to be accepted as well.

Councilman Paterniti asked if there was an update on the demolition of the property on the corner of Palmer and Highland. To date, the demolition has not been approved by SHPO due to its historic design. The Department of Development has been advocating for the demolition. The rehab is cost prohibitive.

Ms. Surdyk announced that Building and Coding Code Enforcement Officer Larry Scalise will be retiring on Friday, June 27, 2025 and will be replaced by Kenny Garcia. Mr. Garcia's first day with the city is July 7, 2025. Additionally, a Principal Planner, Jason Kulaszewski has been hired. Jason is relocating from Buffalo and Kenny is relocating from South Carolina. Both new hires have extensive experience in their fields.

Councilman Paterniti asked if there are any policies in place to keep people relocating to the area in Jamestown, instead of moving to Lakewood or the surrounding areas. Ms. Surdyk noted that informally, they are directed to city properties and local real estate agents. They do

everything they can to keep them in the city. Ms. Makuch is current working on a recruiting guide to the city.

President Dolce asked about the updates with the Crawford Atlas Building. Ramsey Agriculture purchased 40 Winsor Street and 65 River Street. They are currently working on stabilization with exterior scaffolding at 40 Winsor. It is mostly superficial. The owner of the company is in the structural steel business. He has provided plans for internal stabilization. A lot of activity will be happening going forward. Over \$250,000 has been put into the building already. They would like to acquire additional parcels as well. The plan is to have vertical growing operations; such as micro greens, vegetables, etc. Additionally, they will be utilizing bio digestion to energize their entire facility. The hope is to create enough energy to feed back into the power grid.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.
Jennifer R. John City Clerk/Treasurer