

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

JUNE 26, 2024 – 5:30 PM

City Hall – Second Floor Conference Room
47 Castle Street
Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

Watch the livestream on the City of Geneva's YouTube Channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/cityofgenevany>

1. ROLL CALL

Present: Clr. Lavin, Clr. Gillotte, Clr. Petropoulos, Clr. Moracco, Clr. Brennan

Absent: Clr. Pealer, Clr. Grimaldi, Clr. Whitfield

2. AMENDMENT TO THE AGENDA

A. Executive Session – to discuss the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body.

B. Resolution – Property Auction Bid Acceptance 2024

ACTION TAKEN by Mayor Valentino; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED TO amend the agenda

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 Absent)

3. PRESENTATION – Ontario County Housing Study

Ontario County Director of Planning Thomas Harvey and Economic Developer Ryan Davis presented the Ontario County Housing Needs Assessment. Mayor Valentino wondered at the onset of the presentation if things have changed since last fall when the subcommittee last met. Mr. Davis advised that some availability and affordability data has changed, as prices are higher and stock is lower. He noted that this presentation is simply the facts. Clr. Lavin then wondered if there was any discussion in and around the study relating to Short Term Rentals. Mr. Harvey stated that there was none, and noted that the City of Geneva had 586 vacant dwelling units in the 2020 Census. Mr. Davis added that the Short Term Rentals have raised issues in other municipalities as well, and may become a study in and of itself. He further shared that Ontario County is looking at how to help municipalities address these issues.

Mr. Davis shared that Urban Partners was contracted for the Housing Study and explained the phases of the study. He explained that Ontario County was divided into four submarkets for the study, Geneva being in Submarket Four. He also noted that Canandaigua, Victor and Farmington are

growing, while the remainder of the County is in population decline. Ontario County has the highest home ownership in the region at 73%, however, the City of Geneva has a 48.4% home ownership rate. Renter occupied units in Geneva run at 41%, while the county overall has a 27% renter occupied rate.

Market Analysis was reviewed, noting that home prices have increased significantly since the study took place. Reasons for price escalation were reviewed and include homes getting bigger and increases in the cost of construction. Rental units in multi family complexes are the highest in Submarket Two (Canandaigua, Victor, Farmington), making up 89% of Ontario County's total rental units in multifamily complexes. It was noted that new builds are not cheap to rent, leading families to make significant choices to afford rent. The market equilibrium for vacancy rates in multifamily rental complexes is 5%, while in Submarket 4 the rate is 3.4%. The average year of construction of apartments was also reviewed, showing that Geneva's average year of construction is 1918, 10 years older than the average of the totals of Submarket Four.

While reviewing Future Housing Needs it was noted that Geneva's demographics show a younger population, as people are moving out of the city as their wealth grows, leaving Geneva with a smaller percentage of school aged children. Ontario County is on track for 3.1% growth between 2010-2040. Some challenges associated with this growth include employers not being motivated to move into the County, as there are few potential employees to draw from. 60% of new construction is geared towards senior housing, as seniors are looking for homes to downsize to. Discussion followed regarding senior housing and larger homes they are trying to downsize out of.

Survey Results were reviewed and the following results were presented: the high cost of homes is the most significant barrier to purchasing a home in Ontario County; needs for seniors to downsize and age in place; and 80% of renters in Ontario County experienced difficulties paying for other necessities due to high housing costs, including the higher cost of utilities in units that are older and not built to be efficient.

Key take aways of the study were reviewed to include concentrated growth in the county, the need for starter homes and more multi family units, updates to existing aged multi family housing, the need to make housing more affordable, zoning and land use reform, and the need for more senior citizen housing. Mr. Harvey noted that the County has eight planners on staff, who are able to help with zoning, etc., and shared that the Board of Supervisors is supportive of them assisting municipalities. Clr. Lavin wondered about the macro issue of taxes and if regionalization of services is part of the housing study discussion. Mr. Harvey shared that infrastructure meetings are occurring, and Mr. Davis noted that Geneva is working on some of these problems, noting that Geneva's Director of Economic Development and Planning David West has good ideas that Ontario County may want to utilize as well. Clr. Lavin then suggested that the consolidation of services should be county wide, mentioning a county in Florida that has implemented such measures. Mr. Davis replied that there is no overnight solution. Discussion followed. Clr Brennan wondered how farmland plays into the housing study. Mr. Harvey noted that there is still a lot of farms out there, even in Submarket Two, which has the highest growth, and noted that Submarket Two's proximity to Rochester makes it attractive as well. Clr. Brennan then wondered how to make affordable housing. Some strategies include working with developers, PILOT, grants, and adjusting zoning codes for higher density. Mr. Harvey also noted that there tend to be more amenities with more units noting that young people prefer overall to live where there are more amenities. Clr. Lavin noted that the revamping of downtown came from state money, and wondered if the city should go back to industrial days. Discussion followed. Mr. Davis also noted that the Pro Housing grant is the way to get the most money to fund housing solutions.

Some strategies were reviewed to improve housing availability and affordability. Some strategies include creating a county housing staff position or office/department, diversify housing stock, retain and create new income restricted rentals, reduce barriers for first time home buyers, increase the

supply of workforce housing and high-density residential products, and expand housing options for the growing senior population. To facilitate the expansion of housing development to stimulate growth recommendations include evaluating existing land use and housing policies, streamlining the county's housing delivery and supportive services, and ensuring that residential growth occurs sustainably and equitably. Stabilizing the County's aging housing stock to minimize negative impacts of vacant and dilapidated units and supporting home renovation for older housing stock are also recommended strategies.

City Manager Hendrix noted that the City is watching about 100 Short Term Rental Units, some of which are just one room, some of which are a whole house. Discussion followed around the one room rentals possibly supporting the affordability of the rest of the home for the owners. Director West wondered about the changes in household size. Mr. Harvey shared that the number of people living in one dwelling unit has gone down, and noted that as communities' loose population housing stock availability goes up. Discussion followed. Clr. Petropoulos wondered what comes first, housing or employees? Discussion followed around having more jobs than can be filled right now, noting that as Ontario County leans into the travel and tourism market the jobs created pay lower wages. Mr. Harvey then noted that it's important to remember the importance of smaller multi family units, as young people in the community need a place to start out, stay, and invest in the community. Clr. Gillotte wondered how much of a role schools play in where people choose to live. Mr. Harvey shared that schools do play a part, and that Victor is the only district in Ontario County experiencing growth.

4. EXECUTIVE SESSION

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Brennan; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED THAT council move to executive session at 6:44pm to discuss the proposed acquisition, sale or lease of real property or the proposed acquisition of securities, or sale or exchange of securities held by such public body.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 Absent)

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Petropoulos; seconded by Clr. Lavin

MOVED THAT council exit executive session at 6:58pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 Absent)

5. NEW BUSINESS

Resolution – Property Auction Bid Acceptance 2024 – Presented by Comptroller Newcomb

RESOLUTION # 46 - 2024

RESOLUTION FOR SALE OF REAL PROPERTY ACQUIRED THROUGH ENFORCEMENT OF DELINQUENT TAXES

WHEREAS, City-owned real property acquired by way of foreclosure of delinquent tax debt pursuant to Article 11 of the NYS Real Property Tax Law were held out for online and in-person public auction on June 26th, 2024 by Absolute Auction; and

WHEREAS, the properties are all sold “as is” and without any representation or warranties of any kind; and

WHEREAS, The Property Disposition Team recommends accepting the following high bids:

Auction Lot Number & Address	High Bidder	Bid Amount
#1 – 46 Hallenbeck Ave	Silver Lining Capital Group	\$11,000
#2 – 132 N Exchange St	William P. Laquitara	\$6,000
#3- Clark St Ext (91.13-1-5)	David Johnson	\$5,000
#4- Clark St Ext (91.13-1-5.100)	William P. Laquitara	\$2,000
#5- Dixon Ave	Wesley Sensenig	\$6,000
#7- Katherine Street	Flower City Habitat for Humanity	\$7,000
#8 – 59 West Ave	Tatiana Dixon	\$30,000
#12 – 69 Jefferson Ave	Jessica Serrett	\$70,000
#13 – Clinton St	Lisa & Bernard LLC	\$1,750
#14- 26 Hoffman Ave	Tatiana Dixon	\$6,000
#15 – 165 Washington St	Jessica Serrett	\$129,000
#16- Jay St	Lisa & Bernard LLC	\$7,250

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Geneva City Council, hereby and in due form, accepts the above bids; and further

RESOLVED, upon review and approval of the City Attorney, the City of Geneva Comptroller be, and they hereby are, authorized to execute a Quitclaim Deed of the City's interest in each of the above Lots for, and in consideration of, the corresponding Bid Amount set forth above; and further

RESOLVED, the City Comptroller be, and they hereby are, authorized to accept the Bid Amounts set forth above to pay the full delinquent tax bill for each corresponding parcel, plus reasonable and necessary costs associated with the sale, and to remit any surplus to the former property owner in accordance with NYS Real Property Tax Law Article 11

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gillotte; seconded by Clr. Brennan

MOVED THAT this resolution be approved

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 Absent)

6. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Moracco; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos

MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 7:01pm

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY (6-3 Absent)

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk