

THE GENEVA CITY COUNCIL

JOURNAL OF PROCEEDINGS

SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING

FEBRUARY 27, 2025 – 5:30 PM

City Hall – 2nd Floor Conference Room

47 Castle Street

Geneva, NY 14456

Presiding – Steve Valentino, Mayor

1. ROLL CALL

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

Absent: Clr. Whitfield, Clr. Pealer

2. PRESENTATION – Middle & Hallenbeck Street Parcel Development

City Manager Hendrix reviewed the process of sale and development plan for the Middle & Hallenbeck Street parcel. Director West welcomed Jeff Cook, Scott Mulcahy, and Bill Heumann of Cook Properties, and shared that the original proposal for the property was for three houses, however, there is a new proposal for four homes. The purchase offer is \$10,000. Cook Properties development plan includes manufactured homes on the lots. Mr. Cook explained that this is a good solution for affordable housing for infill on vacant city lots. Mr. Mulcahy explained that developers are moving away from the park model of manufactured home communities, and turning to subdivisions and urban infill. He expects the parcels with homes on them to sell in the range of \$120,000 - \$140,000. Director West shared a conversation he had with a young professional recently, looking for a starter home in the City of Geneva, and highlighting this as a good solution.

Councilor Lavin wondered if the homes would be on footers, slabs, or stands. The style of the homes was also discussed. Councilor Grimaldi wondered about the ease of bank financing for manufactured homes. Mr. Cook explained that it can be challenging in parks, but ok in infill situations. He explained that a home on its own lot is considered real property, and banks want to work with these types of loans. Councilor Gillotte wondered what the timeline looks like for project completion. The team explained that typically, the property can be under contract 90-120 days after permits are issued. Mayor Valentino wondered what the advantage is with this development model. The Cook team explained that affordability and the manufacturing process are advantages. They went on to explain that the home is constructed in a climate-controlled factory, not out in the elements, and the trash generated in the installation of the home fits in a standard 96-gallon curbside garbage toter. Councilor Gillotte wondered if there would be soil testing. Director West explained that the City is selling as is via a quit claim deed, and the developer will do what ever testing they need to do for pre-lending. Lowell Dewey wondered if this project would go before the planning board, which it will for subdivision of the parcel. Councilor Lavin wondered if Cook Properties has looked at similar opportunities in the City. The Cook team explained that this is a good place to start, and they'd love to do more.

3. PRESENTATION – 29 Jackson Street Parcel Development

Director West introduced the Foundry lot parcel at 29 Jackson Street, which Home Leasing has offered \$70,000 to purchase and develop multi family housing on. They expect to build about 60 units in one four story building. Lindsey Allen, Development Manager, explained that Home Leasing is a family-owned affordable housing and construction company that develops and manages communities. They aim to be good partners. Home Leasing's Mission and Core Values were reviewed. Ms. Allen shared that Home Leasing has developed 37 communities, with six more under construction. She explained their development approach and noted that they will attend community meetings, and host their own town hall type meetings, if need be. She further explained that the vision for this project is a four-story building with amenities including balconies, outdoor space including a playground, 24 one-bedroom units, and 36 two-bedroom units. All 60 units will be fully accessible, with elevators, a community room with a kitchen, central laundry, internal bike storage and lounges. She further explained that the project will be 100% electric in order to receive State funding. Solar and geothermal were briefly discussed. Councilor Lavin wondered if Home Leasing develops property on long term leased land. Ms. Allen explained that they always own the property. He then wondered about parking, 60 spaces are planned for the site, as about 60 residents typically have cars. Councilor Petropoulos expressed concerns about a high rise in the neighborhood, and concern for values of other properties on the street. Discussion followed. Director West explained that Council can decide to sell the property, or not sell. Next steps will go before the Planning Board where there will be an opportunity to talk to neighbors, adjust design, and for neighborhood involvement. Discussion around housing and economic development trajectory followed. Councilor Lavin wondered if given the complexity of the property, would it be tied up for years prior to development. Director West explained that Home Leasing doesn't close on the property until funding is in place, and further explained annual non-refundable deposits that are required to be made to the City, even if the project doesn't go forward.

Income qualifications for residents were reviewed and discussed, noting that a large portion of the community would qualify to live in this development. The Home Leasing Team explained that projects like this are transformative. Offering affordable housing provides a transition into housing, leading eventually to home ownership for many residents. Councilor Moracco wondered if this would be HUD housing. Ms. Allen explained that some units will be section 8, workforce supportive. Councilor Brennan wondered about the management model of the community. Ms. Allen explained that Home Leasing has a leasing agent, a part time assistant, and full-time permanent maintenance person at each site, with regional leaders making regular visits. Councilor Petropoulos wondered how many Section 8 residents to expect in this building. Ms. Allen explained that some communities have none, and residents bring their vouchers with them, reminding Council that no one is legally allowed to turn away Section 8 vouchers, and went on to explain that voucher holders typically take care of their apartments, because they don't want to lose them. Discussion followed. Mayor Valentino shared that the development will be an advantage to the area, and acknowledged concerns. He went on to say that if all goes well, Geneva will have a lot of housing. The Ontario County Housing Study was discussed, and it was noted that this project ties in nicely, bringing people up, as a net positive for the community. Ms. Allen explained, in response to inquires about how to deal with bad tenants, that onsite leaders proactively engage Police and Fire for quarterly meetings with residents. Mayor Valentino wondered about inspection criteria in units. Ms. Allen shared that there are annual inspections at lease renewal, and any complaints go to the community leader. Mayor Valentino then wondered what water retention plans there are for the project. Max explained that the developer will work with City Engineers and make a plan. Mr. Dewey wondered if Home Leasing can do the work without a PILOT. Ms. Allen explained that it's more difficult without a PILOT, when it comes to underwriting, as PILOT's are more predictable payments, and they would rely on a City/IDA PILOT. Director West shared that the payment per unit will be about \$500 per year.

Ms. Allen reviewed benefits of the project for the City to include property tax revenue of \$25-\$30,000 annually, high quality safe housing, long term affordable housing for the City's workforce, an experienced developer, contractor, and property management. Ms. Allen asked Councilmembers if they were aware of any subset of the City's population that needs housing, as Home Leasing would like to offer support.

Councilor Petropoulos raised concerns about the aesthetics of the project, wondered if there is a plan b two story option, and voiced concerns about rush hour traffic. Ms. Allen explained that the project is at its starting point, and appreciates the good feedback.

City Manager Hendrix reminded Council that it's up to them to sell or not sell, then everything is up to the Planning Board, IDA, and possibly the ZBA. Ms. Nenneau thanked everyone for brining this opportunity to Geneva.

4. ADJOURNMENT

ACTION TAKEN by Clr. Gillotte; seconded by Clr. Petropoulos
MOVED THAT the meeting be adjourned at 6:58pm
MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Nicole Tillotson

City Clerk