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ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MEETING- June 20th, 2017

Present: Councilman Gonzalez, Councilman-at-large Woloszyn, Councilwoman Szukala, Rebecca Yanus, EJ Hayes, Christina Lincoln

Also Present: Mayor Rosas, Skeeter Tower, John Ames, Nicole Gugino

Absent: Councilman Williams and Councilman Bamonto

Meeting was called to order by Andy Gonzalez at 4:00 PM, located in the Mayor's Conference Room.

Consent Agenda:

Councilman Gonzalez presented the meeting minutes from the May 2nd Economic Development meeting. These meeting minutes were accepted by the both Councilwoman Szukala, and Councilman-at-large Woloszyn.

NEW BUSINESS:

Meeting started with Rebecca. giving a brief run-down of the Flaramo Plan which was looked at via PowerPoint in last month's meeting presented by Building/Zoning Officer Al Zurawski.

Rebecca stated she talked with various firms from which a resolution consultant was chosen. Consultant has worked on residential surveys in the Jamestown and Buffalo area and is knowledgeable in combating absent landlord issues.

Rebecca suggested that it would be more beneficial to wait on passing the Local Law until the consultant had a chance to give there recommendations form the residential survey that would take place given the law is passed. She states that the survey would allow the board to implement a local law fit for the community.

Rebecca stated that the residential survey would be immediately conducted if the resolution is passed tonight, and the survey would take approximately 3 months to complete and afterwards plans and recommendations would be given on how to draw-up an affective law for the community.

Christina stated she agreed with Rebecca and said that the board should wait on passing the law based on the fact that the department is understaffed with only 2 trained people and the possibility of more funding for staffing needs to be addressed, which would help

the department to enforce the new law more effectively.

Councilman Gonzalez stated that there were concerns from the public of how the new landlord law would be enforced.

Christina asked how bank owned properties will be handled; she said that this matter is not mentioned in the plan; however use of a consultant may bring clarity on how to handle that specific issue.

Councilwoman Szukala mentioned auction houses in Dunkirk that could potentially be purchased from outsiders such as in California. She stated that strong communication needs to be coordinated between the County and the City as a means of preventative measures to ensure honorable ownership and or landlord ship is being maintained.

Councilman Gonzalez agreed with her and stated that a contact person needs to be provided from the County to the buyer which would ensure the properties are being managed and any issues with the property can be addressed properly.

Rebecca stated that the city attorney did include in the plan that any buyer residing outside of Chautauqua County has to have a contact person provided from the county and that contact person must live within Chautauqua County.

Councilwoman Szukala inquired about violations as she stated the penalty imposed would be \$250.00 up to \$1000.00 time in jail for any property manager who received a violation. She goes on to ask; if someone owns up to 15 houses but they live in California and have a property manager for them all, what happens if a violation is imposed and the property manager flees, who then takes responsibility of those violations.

The city attorney stated that the recourse for that issue was stated in the original Flaramo draft. He continues by saying if a non resident owner does not designate a property manager then the owner can be charged with a misdemeanor and a warrant issued for their arrest even if they reside in California, however, he stated that it's possible the warrant may or may not be executed.

Councilwoman Szukala voiced her concerns again regarding the violations stating that the law would be on the books but unable to enforced.

Councilman Gonzalez suggested that if the warrant/violation is unable to be executed or the fine is unpaid for so many days then the possibility of forfeiture of the property could be an option.

The city attorney stated that forfeiture could be an option although then the city would still end up owning a bunch of properties that need work done to them.

Councilman-at-Large Woloszyn redirects the conversation and stated that the main priority of the meeting is talk of a consultant and he agreed that waiting to settle the manner until a consultant is chosen is the better recourse

Skeeter Tower asked if up to date information on the plan can be obtained from

Skeeter Tower asked if the yearly report is available to the public.

Councilman Gonzalez stated that all public information is available on the Freedom Information Act online.

Skeeter Tower asked the councilmember's on a scale of 1-10 how effective is the current system.

Councilman Gonzalez responded by saying a 7, the female audience speaker said that he was being optimistic.

Councilman-at-Large Woloszyn stated it's important to keep in mind AI operates out of the parameters he's been given by the law. He goes on to give an example saying; if someone has grass that's 6 inches high and is sent a letter, it takes time to receive that letter, then once they receive it they have a certain amount of days to adhere to the letter. He states that it's a time consuming process and technically someone by law only has to cut their grass 3 times during the summer.

Skeeter Tower stated that the Flaramo Plan was put together to address the weak points in the law and revitalize Dunkirk, she goes on to mention her frustrations stating that there are many "shabby houses and roofs falling in" in our community.

The meeting ends with Councilman Gonzalez stating that the laws have to change however; it takes time to change laws.

Jamestown because the plan is outdated.

Rebecca stated that the consultant would be able to help furnish a solid up to date plan that would help to format a good plan designed for our community.

John Ames asked Andy if anyone has looked at surrounding areas to see what plans they have implemented before hiring a consultant.

Councilman Gonzalez and Councilman-at-Large Woloszyn stated that was just discussed and that is the main reason a consultant is needed to help design a specific plan for our area.

Rebecca stated the consultant will be funded through awarded grant money at no cost to the tax payers.

Skeeter Tower asked how the city will identify the landlords of zombie properties and where the properties are.

Skeeter Tower stated that "Tom" and "Mark" office identifies that information through the water bill which shows the location, if it's a rental or occupied and the owner.

Rebecca stated that a consultant could map the properties.

Skeeter Tower asked if current city employees could help with the inspections of the zombie properties which would alleviate the work load of the 1 building inspector Al Zuraski. She also suggested the public community could form a sub committee to help generate ideas which would eliminate the need for a consultant.

Rebecca stated that public meetings will still be held which would allow the ideas of the general public at that time.

Christina said that it's possible a vacant property task force could be put in place which would consist of volunteers to help out with the survey.

Skeeter Tower asked how much consultant will cost.

Rebecca stated the resolution will cost \$77,000.00 Christina also stated that the grant included data points, maps and publications which give everyone access to the details on what the consultant is doing with the plan.

Skeeter Tower asked about the statistics and how fined information on the income from fines and court.

Councilwoman Szukala states that a yearly report is given to each council member at the end of each year from building and zoning explaining how many violations and notices were sent out regarding what issue for example grass and garbage.