

Neighborhood Improvement Meeting
11-15-22

Present: Hannah, Sam, Bob, Maria, Marty, Charles

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

Housekeeping Items:

- Changing meeting times and frequency
 - Starting in December, we will meet twice per month.
 - Meetings will be held on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month at 6 PM.
 - 12/6 and 12/20
 - Marty is inquiring about room availability in the United Methodist Church at these times.
- We want more actionable items between meetings to keep momentum going.
- There is no specific timeline for proposals to the Housing Commission, but we want to provide recommendations as soon as possible.
 - Formalized proposals will be drafted and reviewed as a workgroup, then sent to the Housing Commission.

Ideas for Proposals:

1. Increased Staffing in Code Enforcement
 - a. Everyone agreed that more staff in the Code Enforcement office is critical for neighborhood improvement.
 - b. We created a proposed statement to send to the Housing Commission:
“We recommend that the City of Oneonta prioritizes the budgeting of more staff in the Code Enforcement department. Our current system of relying largely on citizens to report violations is not cost-effective. Any cost incurred by the additional staff will be offset by increasing the value of homes and quality of neighborhoods in Oneonta.”
 - i. We will add citations from Marty’s document to bolster this, then we will each sign the final version and send it for review.
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2. Licensing for Long-Term Rentals
 - a. If it is not already in existence, could we recommend a permitting or licensing process for long-term rentals (not just short-term) that is renewed every year?
 - b. This would ideally be done through the Code Enforcement office.
 - c. Maria will reach out to Stephen Yerly to confirm the current process.
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3. Blight Ordinances
 - a. This would create a process for further managing exterior property maintenance.
 - b. Hannah will share examples of blight ordinances from other municipalities.

4. Student Housing Code and Zoning
 - a. The city of Binghamton received funding from the American Rescue grant to help fund a new prosecutor and additional staff members in Code Enforcement and the Parks Department to address “persistent blight” and unsafe housing conditions.
 - i. Their Parks Department handles snow and lawn complaints.
 - b. Sam will share links to the examples from the city of Binghamton.

5. Code Enforcement Annual “Sweep”
 - a. In Oswego, their Code Enforcement office does a two-week “sweep” every year of the entire city to identify and address code violations.
 - b. Sam will share the link to this article.

Discussion:

- How can we get code information to new homebuyers and renters in the city?
 - Bob will talk to the chair of the city’s new Welcome Wagon taskforce about pursuing this in their group.
- We were tasked with taking an informal inventory of “properties of concern” in our neighborhoods at our September meeting.
 - Everyone will send their findings to Charles.
- How do we want to define an “improved neighborhood”?
 - This will help provide focus and direction for our group.
 - Everyone will write their own definition and bring this to the next meeting to create one cohesive statement.
- How are other municipalities paying for exterior improvement grants to homeowners?
 - Discussion about student or college fees, or a way to “tax” rental properties (i.e. occupancy tax for hotels).
- When we are bringing individual ideas to the group, we can write a drafted proposal to edit as a group.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40 PM