

# ST. LAWRENCE COUNTY FAIR HOUSING TASK FORCE

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[stlawco.org/Departments/Planning/AdvisoryBoards/FairHousingTaskForce](http://stlawco.org/Departments/Planning/AdvisoryBoards/FairHousingTaskForce)



## Meeting Minutes

November 19, 2024

1. **Call to Order and Determination of a Quorum.** Mike McQuade called the meeting to order at 10:02 AM. McQuade ran the meeting in the absence of the chair PJ Herne.

**Members Present:** Bob Santamoor; Mike McQuade; Valerie Dana; Mike Zagrobelny; Pamela Weed-Nichols; Jason Pfothenauer; Courtnie Toms. **A quorum was established.**

**Others Present:** Tom Graser – Watertown Daily Times; Leanne Emerson – Tradesmen Contracting, LLC.

**Staff Assistance:** Matilda Larson and Preston Santimaw – St. Lawrence County Planning Office

2. **Adoption of the Agenda.** McQuade asked if there were any changes to the agenda. Larson stated she wanted to add a Pro-Housing funding announcement and Pfothenauer wanted to speak about Rural Preservation Companies (RPCs).

The modified agenda was adopted by consensus (Pfothenauer/Zagrobelny).

3. **Approval of August 27<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes.** The minutes for the previous meeting were approved by consensus (Santamoor/Zagrobelny).

4. **New Business.**

- a. Preliminary Research for Exclusionary Zoning Analysis – Story Map Presentation by Preston Santimaw. This presentation included:

1. An overview of the ArcGIS Story Map introduction put together by Planning Office staff was presented. Task Force members and staff discussed:
  - Differentiate between which uses require site plan review or a special use permit in the table analysis;
  - Look at vacant properties to determine how much land is available for housing in residential zones;

- Include a section in the data analysis on considerations that make housing viable in these areas such as stormwater runoff and water and sewer infrastructure;
  - Consider expanding the analysis to smaller communities such as the Villages of Waddington, Heuvelton, Norwood, and the hamlet of Hannawa Falls;
  - Identify services or amenities located in communities;
  - Include a paragraph that highlights the additional protected classes in the State of New York.
- b. Future Discussion with Vecino Group – Midtown Plaza project in Canton. Task Force members and staff discussed:
1. The Vecino Group is an organization who has proposed plans for a construction project in Canton’s midtown plaza that includes multi-family housing. Staff reached out to see if Vecino Group would be available to speak to the Task Force about the project. They said that they are still in the early stages of the process, but plan to involve the Task Force in discussions/focus groups once they develop a project schedule.
  2. Pfothenauer: Some funding for this project is from the New York Forward Program.

## **5. Old Business.**

- a. July 1<sup>st</sup> adoption of the Fair Housing Assessment. Task Force members and staff discussed:
1. This assessment included seven fair housing goals and priorities. The Task Force has already taken steps to achieve three of these goals:
    - Goal #1; Create an ArcGIS Story Map to Identify Exclusionary Zoning and Land Use Regulations
    - Goal #3; Address Exclusionary Zoning and Land Use Regulations when Providing Local Planning Assistance to Municipalities
      - o The Village of Heuvelton recently adopted a Comprehensive Plan which it contracted with the County Planning Office to complete. This plan contains goals and recommendations for rehabilitating substandard housing stock and adaptive reuse/rezoning to accommodate multi-family/low-income housing.
    - Goal #4; Provide Fair Housing Education to Local Officials
      - o Staff announced a panel discussion for December 2024. This will be held with partner agencies who intake housing complaints to educate those who may not know who to contact with a housing complaint.

## **6. Updates and Announcements.**

- a. Agency Updates
- Bob Santamoor said that the Potsdam Housing Authority project has completed local review, and currently awaits NYS HCR authorization to proceed.

- b. Setting the meeting calendar for 2025.
  - The 2025 Fair Housing Task Force meeting dates were set to be held at 10:00am in the second-floor conference room at the HSC in Canton. The meeting dates are as follows:
    - Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025
    - Tuesday, May 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025
    - Tuesday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025
    - Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025
  - The meeting dates for 2025 were adopted by consensus (McQuade/Santamoor).
- c. Potential candidates to fill Fair Housing Task Force Vacancies?
  - A seat is open for an individual in housing construction or appraisal.
  - Larson suggested reaching out to the St. Lawrence County Real Property office. Zagrobelny said he would suggest a candidate.
- d. Santimaw provided information on the NYS HCR Plus One ADU Program. A copy of the announcement will be forwarded to Fair Housing Task Force members.
- e. Pfothenauer discussed the application for a new RPC, for which the State encourages submissions from Niagara and St. Lawrence counties. He stated that staff are working with local non-profits to encourage them to submit applications. The executive director of the NYS Rural Housing Coalition suggested the RPC apply for land bank funding.
- f. The next Fair Housing Task Force meeting will be Tuesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 10:00 am at the HSC Second-Floor Conference Room at 80 State Highway 310, Canton.

**7. Adjourn.** The meeting adjourned at 11:01 AM (Santamoor/Pfothenauer).

Respectfully submitted,

*Preston Santimaw*

Planner I