

LABOR, WORKFORCE AND AFFORDABLE HOUSING COMMITTEE

OF THE

SUFFOLK COUNTY LEGISLATURE

Minutes

A regular meeting of the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee of the Suffolk County Legislature was held in the Rose Y. Caracappa Legislative Auditorium of the William H. Rogers Legislature Building, 725 Veterans Memorial Highway, Smithtown, New York on November 12, 2009.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Leg. Lynne C. Nowick, Chairperson
Leg. Kate M. Browning, Vice Chair
Leg. Thomas F. Barraga
Leg. Jack Eddington
Leg. DuWayne Gregory

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

George Nolan, Counsel to the Legislature
Sarah Simpson, Assistant Counsel
Renee Ortiz, Chief Deputy Clerk
Joe Muncey, Budget Review Office
Ed Hennessy, County Executive Aide
Patrick Skip Heaney, Commissioner of Economic Development and Workforce Housing
Jill Rosen-Nikoloff, Director of Affordable Housing
Joe Sansavarino, Community Development Director
Greg Moran, Aide to Leg. Nowick
Rob Calarco, Aide to Leg. Eddington
Paul Perillie, Aide to Majority Leader
Linda Bay, Aide to Minority Leader
Debra Alloncius, Legislative Rep for AME
Gail Lolis, Deputy County Attorney
All other interested parties

VERBATIM MINUTES TAKEN BY:

Diana Flesher, Court Stenographer

VERBATIM MINUTES TRANSCRIBED BY:

Denise Weaver, Legislative Aide

THE MEETING WAS CALLED TO ORDER AT 1:14 PM

VICE CHAIR BROWNING:

Good afternoon. We will start the Labor, Workforce and Affordable Housing Committee. Legislator Nowick is on her way but we will start the Pledge of Allegiance led by Legislator Barraga.

SALUTATION

Okay. And while we're waiting, I guess there's no cards. And I know there's a couple of resolutions here, if anyone would like to come and speak. If -- **1867, A Local Law to expedite construction of affordable housing**. If anyone would like to come and kind of give us some input on that one.

And also, Joe, you're here, if you could speak on the neighborhood stabilization, that would be good.

COMMISSIONER HEANEY:

Thank you. So 1867 is like a number of another initiatives. Similarly Legislator Cooper has a tabled resolution 1568. There are at least two other bills that are in consideration, all that individually nibble at the margins of the County's 72-h Program in different ways.

Legislator Schneiderman's law would shorten the total length of time that a parcel once has been transferred to a town could remain undeveloped. Currently a property is transferred to a township for a period of three years. And the County law provides an opportunity for two two-year extensions, which theoretically and in fact has resulted in a number of instances in a situation where seven years have lapsed and a property has not been developed.

So the purpose of the law is a good one. I would say that myself, Jill Rosen-Nikoloff Thompson, Tom Isles in Planning and legal staff in the County Attorney's Office have been working on a comprehensive law that contemplates a number of the goals that are put forward in these smaller laws. And individually we have been asking members of Legislature for an opportunity to come back to the Legislature with a comprehensive bill that addresses all of this and, in fact, examines as an adjunct to this a means of expanding upon the 72-h development rights -- registry so that we can contemplate not only uses there where we have fractional development rights, we're also taking a look at how we might be prepared to better address some of the initiative put forward by the Presiding Officer in terms of expanding upon the general use of development rights for downtown revitalization efforts beyond just workforce housing.

So we would hope that there could be a tabling of these types of laws that nibble at the 72-h Program in favor of one more affirmative statement that comprehensively deals with a number of the issues.

VICE CHAIR BROWNING:

So, you know, I know that you have a three year period. So you 72-h the property, that municipality has three years. What generally is the reason why if in three years they haven't developed it? What's usually the reason for that?

COMMISSIONER HEANEY:

I'm not going to speak for the Legislative discretion. It happens in any town.

VICE CHAIR BROWNING:

Okay. And, Joe, if you'd like to speak on the Long Island Housing Partnership, the Stabilization Program and explain that.

MR. SANSEVARINO:

Good afternoon. The resolution that basically will allow the County to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Long Island Housing Partnership for the purposes of participating in what the

federal government calls their Neighborhood Stabilization Two Program, currently the County has received funding for Neighborhood Stabilization One and Neighborhood Stabilization directly from the federal government and also from New York State. And we are currently implementing those activities in cooperation with the Long Island Housing Partnership.

What the federal government has done with this Neighborhood Stabilization Two Program, which is basically a program where we're going to be acquiring foreclosed properties, renovating them and then selling them to first-time home buyers, but what they've done with the latest allocation of Neighborhood Stabilization Two funding is they've created a Competitive Grant Program that is a competitive program nationwide. Whereas in the past, we received a direct allocation of funds from both the state and the federal government. We now have to compete nationwide for this funding.

What we've decided to do here on Long Island in order to have an application that's competitive with some of more severely impacted areas of foreclosures throughout the country, we formed a program whereby there would be an application with both Nassau and Suffolk County as one entity with the Long Island Housing Partnership acting as the lead entity for the funding. And we would sign on as have the towns of Islip, Babylon, Brookhaven, Southampton and Nassau County to this agreement where we're basically saying we will cooperate with the partnership and the other members of this consortium that we put together to implement the programs should the grant be awarded. It's a little unusual. HUD is asking for the agreement before they make an award of the grant. It's a highly competitive grant. There was about 500 applications nationwide for about \$2 billion in funding. They've gotten applications requesting totaling close to 5 billion.

So we've put the application together. And as we go through different steps in this process of review, the federal government has been asking for different items. This is the latest item that they've asked for is these cooperation agreements. And we need that to continue in the process. They hope to make an announcement of the awards sometime in January, is the last I had heard. So that's what this resolution would do. It would give us the ability to sign that agreement and keep us in the running for the funding. We've applied for it, by the way, for the Long Island region for about \$20 million in funding.

VICE CHAIR BROWNING:

Okay. You're here.

CHAIRWOMAN NOWICK:

I apologize for being late. Legislator Gregory.

LEG. GREGORY:

I have a question, maybe I missed it, is this for foreclosures?

MR. SANSEVERINO:

Yes. It'll be to buy foreclosed vacant properties, renovate them and then sell them.

LEG. GREGORY:

Okay. All right. Thank you.

CHAIRWOMAN NOWICK:

Are there any other questions? Okay. Does anybody else want to address the committee? Hi, Jill. Okay. Then we will go right to tabled resolutions.

TABLED RESOLUTIONS

1568, Adopting Local Law No. -2009, A Local Law to strengthen the County's land transfer program for affordable housing. (Cooper)

LEG. BROWNING:

Motion to table.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

Motion to table by Legislator Browning.

LEG. BARRAGA:

Second.

CHAIRWOMAN NOWICK:

Second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? **1568 is tabled. (VOTE: 5-0)**

1843, Providing for marriage equality in the Administration of Benefits to Suffolk County Employees. (Cooper) The sponsor has requested a table. I will make that motion, second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? **1843 is tabled. (VOTE: 5-0)**

INTRODUCTORY RESOLUTIONS

1867, Adopting Local Law No. -2009, A Local Law to expedite construction of affordable housing. (Schneiderman) That has to be tabled for public hearing. Right, George?

MR. NOLAN:

Yes.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I'll make a motion to table for public hearing, second by Legislator Gregory. All in favor? Opposed? **1867 is tabled for public hearing. (VOTE: 5-0)**

1902, Authorizing the County Executive to enter into a cooperative agreement with the Long Island Housing Partnership, Inc., for the purpose of implementing activities under the Neighborhood Stabilization Program 2 of the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009. (Co. Exec. Levy) Motion by Legislator Browning, second by Legislator Barraga. All in favor? Opposed? **1092 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0)**

1906, Accepting and appropriating recaptured youth and administrative funds from the New York State Department of Labor for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. (Co. Exec. Levy) I'll make a motion, second by Legislator Browning. And I will make a motion and also place on the consent calendar, 1906. All in favor? Opposed? **1906 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0)**

1907, Accepting and appropriating supplemental dislocated worker ARRA funds from the New York State Department of Labor for the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Program. (Co. Exec. Levy) Same motion, same second. **1907 is passed and also placed on the consent calendar. All in favor? Opposed? 1907 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0)**

1908, Authorizing the disbursement of funds from the Suffolk County Living Wage Contingency Fund for Colonial Youth and Family Services Day Care Provider under contract with the Department of Social Services. (Co. Exec. Levy)

LEG. BROWNING:

Motion.

CHAIRPERSON NOWICK:

I have a motion by Legislator Browning, second by Legislator Gregory. All in favor? Opposed? **1908 is approved. (VOTE: 5-0)**

Is there anybody else that would like to address the Committee? If not, I'll entertain a motion to

adjourn made by Legislator Gregory, second by Legislator Browning. All in favor? Opposed? We are adjourned.

THE MEETING CONCLUDED AT 1:25 PM

{ } DENOTES SPELLED PHONETICALLY