



City of Milwaukee

200 E. Wells Street
Milwaukee, Wisconsin
53202

Meeting Minutes

JOINT COMMITTEE ON REDEVELOPMENT OF ABANDONED AND FORECLOSED HOMES

ALD. ROBERT BAUMAN, CHAIR

Spencer Coggs, Mario Higgins, Ken Barbeau, Larry Kilmer, II,

Ald. Russell Stamper, II, and Jezamil Arroyo-Vega

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Monday, April 28, 2025

10:00 AM

City Hall, Room 301-B

Amended 4/23/25 - Item #11 was added.

Meeting convened: 10:02 AM

Members present: Ken Barbeau, Jezamile Arroyo-Vega, Larry Kilmer, Mario Higgins, Laquisha Schroeder (for Spencer Coggs), and Ald. Robert Bauman

Member excused: Ald. Russell Stamper

1. Review and approval of the September 23rd meeting minutes.

Ms. Arroyo-Vega moved, seconded by Mr. Higgins, for approval of the minutes. There were no objections.

2. Communication from the Department of City Development on Housing Infrastructure Preservation Fund Activities.

Dave Misky, Dept. of City Development, said 58 of the 60 properties that were rehabbed through this program over the years have been sold.

3. Communication from the Department of City Development on the Lease-to-Own Program.

Mr. Dave Misky said Debra McCollum-Gathing is now in charge of this program, which is being closed due to the change in state statute. If tenants are interested in becoming an owner, they should work on getting pre-approval so they will be ready when the property is listed. Under the new ordinance, the city will still be collecting and keeping the rent.

4. Communication from the Department of City Development on the Strong Home Loan Program.

Benjamin Sanchez said so far this year, there have been 21 loans approved and there are 85 applications pending. They are primarily promoting this program at housing fairs.

5. Communication from the Department of City Development on the status of the Homes MKE Program.

Ben Miller, Dept. of City Development, said the houses are moving very quickly and they anticipate getting 37 homes to developers this year and another 15-20 next year with a hard shut-off date of June 2026 as funds need to be utilized by the end of 2026. The developers that are performing are performing well, but some are performing slowly, but still performing. The performing developers take about 4-6 months to develop, but the slower ones take 1-1.5 years. By June 2026, the target is 100-120 homes completed. The contractors contract directly with the developers, not with the city.

6. Communication from the Department of Department of City Development on the Down Payment Assistance Program.

Benjamin Sanchez, Neighborhood Improvement Development Corporation, said it provides up to \$7,000 or \$5,000 for down payment assistance, dependent on the location of the property. Overall the program has helped about 1,000 first-time homeowners with down-payment assistance and continues to operate. The program received about \$1.2 million for 2025 and the funds are managed by the non-profit agencies, which are required to track that the person has moved into the property.

7. Communication from the Department of Neighborhood Services on the Compliance Loan Program.

Tanz Rome said the program is funded at \$1 million and does about 60 projects per year. One NID inspector is funded with the money and the program is a well-oiled machine that has a lot of interest and there is an unmet need. She would like to see the program funded at \$1.2 million, but that would also require more city staff.

8. Communication from the Department of Neighborhood Services relating to demolition and deconstruction.

Jumaane Cheatham said 25 demolitions were done of private properties and 15 through DPW for the city-owned properties. They have currently done 2 BID projects, which include a couple larger commercial properties that DPW cannot do. They have 7 active contractors, which is up from last year's number of two. DNS is down about 100 properties on the demo list since the September meeting of the Joint Committee. Some of the older stock has been demolished due to increased funding and an increased number of contractors. They have demolished 40 with the year-end goal of 180.

9. Communication from various departments on the status of \$43.5 million in ARPA funds allocated for housing.

Mr. Jumaane Cheatham, Dept. of Neighborhood Services, said the dept. has 53 restoration agreements with building owners with the hopes of avoiding demolition. Those properties are still on the demo list as they are considered uninhabitable at this point in time.

10. Communication from various departments regarding the city's plan to develop single family and duplex housing stock.

Dave Misky, Dept. of City Development, said that TIDs are being created for single-family development. The real challenge is funding to construct a brand-new house and to sell it for the constructed price. Ald. Bauman would prefer existing structures be renovated rather than new construction. Ed Miller, Homes MKE, said rehab costs are 70-80% of new construction costs.

11. Communication from the City Attorney's Office regarding s. 304-49, Milw. Code of Ordinances, relating to the in-rem foreclosure sale process.

This item and #12 were taken first at the meeting.

Individuals present:

Evan Goyke and Alan Carson - City Attorney's Office

Dave Misky - Dept. of City Development

There was a change in state statutes with Act 207 passed in March 2024 which resulted in ordinance and procedure changes needed at the local level. Assistant City Attorney Carson said that there is now a deadline to list tax-foreclosed properties within 240 days (currently) and will be changing to 120 days of being foreclosed. The city also has to list them via appraised value, which will probably be fair market value. Every single family, owner-occupied home has the inherent right to get the home back as long as they can pay the full debt plus costs and expenses; the right to get the home back doesn't terminate unless there is an accepted offer that goes through. The application fee of \$1300 would now be in violation as well. If the property is vacant as well as other specific scenarios, the deadline to list is 3 years. The city can act on any health and safety concerns during these deadline periods. The city can list a single-family owner-occupied property if the prior owner doesn't have the funds to pay. The city can sell a property for less than fair-market value if it's listed on the web site as to why (as in there were no offers at the fair-market value). This only affects properties taken by the city since the passing of the legislation; any prior properties can be listed under the old city legislation. The plan under the proposed ordinance is that the original listing will be 30 days and any subsequent listings will be open ended. The departments and city attorney are still working through these changes. The Comptroller will be the office that sends out the surplus checks to the former owner, working with the all the affected departments. Ald. Bauman believes that Council members would like to have the ability to approve the final sale of the property to any entity that isn't a proposed owner-occupant. All buy backs, except for owner-occupied properties, is in the proposed ordinance for Council reviews, but not straight sales to a third party, which will be changed.

12. Communication from the City Attorney's Office regarding updates on neighborhood revitalization litigation.

This item and item #11 were taken first at the meeting.

Evan Goyke, City Attorney, would like to have a closed session for future meetings to discuss pending litigation. There was a property on North Marietta that had been by an owner with a long history of hoarding and the property was in poor shape for decades

and a developer neighbor has purchased and stabilized the property and it should become habitable in 2025.

13. Public Comment

No members of the public were present and wished to comment.

14. Set next meeting date.

No meeting date set.

Meeting adjourned: 11:00 AM

Linda M. Elmer

Staff Assistant

This meeting can be viewed in its entirety through the City's Legislative Research Center at <http://milwaukee.legistar.com/calendar>.

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Communication relating to the 2025 activities of the Joint Committee on the Redevelopment of Abandoned and Foreclosed Homes.

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