

# Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank Corp.

March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2023

2022 Annual Report to the Seneca County Board  
of Supervisors

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# Mission Statement

The Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank Corporation acquires, improves, and redistributes vacant, blighted, and tax abandoned properties to eliminate the harms and liabilities caused by such properties and returns them to productive use, while being consistent with local municipalities' redevelopment and comprehensive plans.

Annual Report also serving as the mission statement Measurement Report for ABO

# Board Members 2022-2024

- Frank Sinicropi – Chair (Seneca Falls Town Board)
- Jill Henry – Vice Chair (Director of Planning)
- Les Marquart (Seneca County Treasurer)
- Ernie Brownell (Junius Town Supervisor)
- Kyle Barnhart (Lodi Town Supervisor)
- David Wood (Ovid Village Trustee)
- Don Northrup (Village of Waterloo Administrator)
  
- Officers (Not Board Members)
  - Joe McGrath, CEO/President
  - Michael Scaglione, CFO/Treasurer
  - Amanda Forney, Secretary

Meetings are held on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 4:00 in the Hero's Conference Room.

# Land Bank Process

- Land Bank takes tax foreclosed, vacant, abandoned, and condemned properties and works to return them to beneficial use which normally takes the form of safe, decent, and affordable housing
- Tax foreclosed properties that are candidates for Land Bank intervention are identified and transferred by the BOS for a nominal fee of \$1.
- Upon acquisition, Land Bank properties are immediately tax exempt.
- Land Bank relies on partnerships with organizations like Habitat for Humanity for rehabilitation and new construction work. Working on creating new partnerships with FLACRA and Lakeview Health Services.
- Projects that result in fully rehabbed properties or new construction represent the best opportunities for significant revenue for the Land Bank as well as long term taxable value for the county.
- FLRLBC focuses on properties that have access to water and sewer
- It is possible for the FLRLBC to acquire a vacant and abandoned property without access to public water and sewer if requested by a Town or Village. The property will most likely be put to RFP to identify stable and responsible owners that will take care of the issues.

# Funding

- HCR Land Bank Initiative (LBI) funding included in 2022 NYS Budget - \$50 Million Total
  - Applied for and awarded \$100,000 in administration and operation funds in 2022
  - Applied for \$369,600 for rehab, demolition, acquisition, and pre-development funds
    - Award announcement expected in April
- MOA between FLRLBC and Seneca County
  - Memorandum of Agreement between FLRLBC and Seneca County covers 2023 – 2024
- Grant Support
  - Enterprise Community Partners Inc. – \$650,000 closed out June 2022
- Property Sales
  - When a property is sold the revenue becomes unrestricted for Land Bank use
  - Co-Development Agreements supported by grant funding also produce unrestricted revenue
- Local CDBG Funds
  - Seneca County and the Town of Romulus committed funds to FLRLBC from shuttered NYS revolving loan fund programs
- Debt
  - The FLRLBC currently holds no debt

# Land Bank Inventory (12/31/22)

Property	Municipality	Acquisition	Partner
8388 Knight Street	Village of Interlaken	2022	Habitat
1372 Prospect Street	Town of Romulus (Willard)	2022	Habitat
2271 E. Seneca Street	Village of Lodi	2022	Habitat
2125 W. Seneca Street	Village of Ovid	2022	Habitat
2146 W. Seneca Street	Village of Ovid	2019	Potential Ovid Development
04-1-80 Railroad Avenue	Village of Waterloo	2018	Accepting Applications for Purchase
22-26 Virginia Street	Village of Waterloo	2018	Potential Brownfield

# Land Bank Acquisitions 2022

Property	Municipality	Acquisition	Status
8388 Knight Street	Interlaken	2022	Pre-Dev for New Construction
1372 Prospect Street	Town of Romulus (Willard)	2022	Pre-Dev for New Construction
2261 E. Seneca Street	Village of Lodi	2022	Pre-Dev for New Construction
2271 E. Seneca Street	Village of Lodi	2022	Pre-Dev for New Construction
2125 W. Seneca Street	Village of Ovid	2022	Pre-Dev for New Construction
108 Mynderse Street	Seneca Falls	2022	Pending Demolition - Pre-Dev for New Construction

Demolition and Pre-Development Funds Included in HCR LBI Grant Application, Expected Award Announcement in April 2023

# Property Dispositions in 2022

Property	Municipality	Acquisition	Sale	Price
101 Virginia Street	Village of Waterloo	2018	2022	\$3,000 David Wagenhauser
108 Mynderse Street	Seneca Falls	2022	2022	\$1 – Habitat
33 Taylor Avenue	Village of Waterloo	2017	2022	\$14,000 – Habitat
2261 E. Seneca Street	Village of Lodi	2022	2022	\$2,000 – Subdivided between Rose Riley and David Thompson
1537 County Road 132	T. Romulus (Willard)	2019	2022	\$1 - Habitat
156 Fall Street	Town of Seneca Falls	2019	2022	\$1 - Habitat

Projects transferred utilize co-development agreements for each property. The \$1 sale price is used at property transfer looking forward to proceeds from the eventual sale of a new or rehabbed home being split between Habitat and FLRLBC.



# Projects: 156 Fall Street, Seneca Falls Full Rehabilitation



Full List of 2022 Projects at End of Report



# 1537 Main Street, Willard

## Demolition to New Construction





# 2125 W. Seneca Street, Ovid Demolition and Pre-Development



# Expected 2023 Activities

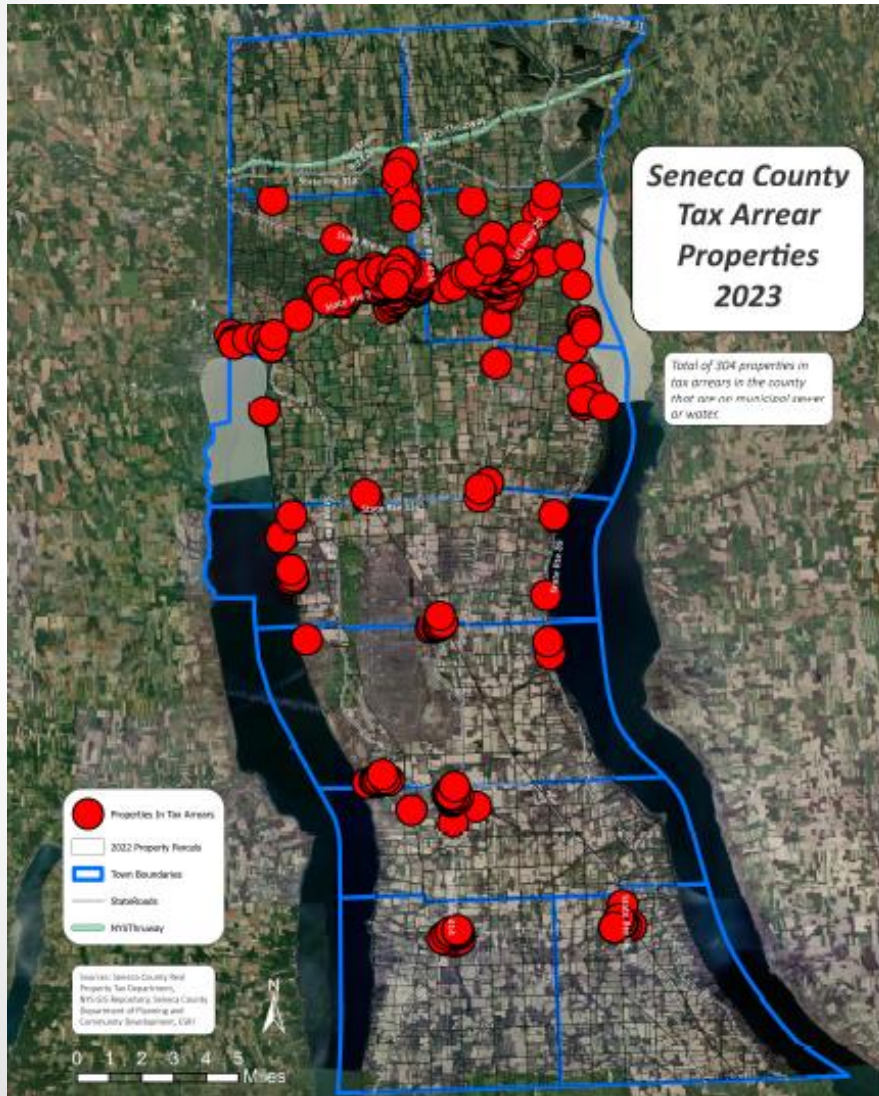
- 1 property from tax foreclosure list demolished and put into predevelopment for new construction
- 1 property from tax foreclosure list stabilized and transferred to partner for full rehabilitation
- NYS Homes and Community Renewal Land Bank Initiative Phase II Funding
  - Fund activities above
  - Expected Award Announcement April 2023
  - All projects require HCR Environmental Review including prior to acquisition
  - Proposed up to nine sites for pre-development work (site plans, etc.)
- FLRLBC Strategic Plan & Grant Writing Project
  - Create models for development of properties in FLRLBC inventory
  - Apply for grant funding for new construction and rehab projects (scattered site)
  - Ensure the FLRLBC creates operating revenue
  - Funded by HCR LBI Grant Phase I
- Brownfields
  - Seneca County expecting award of \$500,000 EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant
  - Brownfield Strategy developed by Seneca County Planning and FLRLBC with support from MRB Group
  - Seneca County, FLRLBC, DEC, Comptroller Agreement
    - County, FLRLBC, and DEC executed, Comptroller to sign next

# Property Acquisition and Grant Competitiveness

- To be competitive for more HCR funds that allow for scattered site development, the estimation is that a minimum of 15 units need to be newly constructed or rehabbed. In our rural setting, this number may be higher due to distances between sites. Strategic Plan will help guide what is possible.
- FLRLBC and Habitat complete 2-4 projects a year utilizing available funding sources at that scale. Need and demand is much higher.
- If awarded LBI Phase 2 funds, as many as nine (9) properties in our inventory will be bundled for predevelopment. The predevelopment phase occurs prior to construction and must be completed to apply for funding.
- Over 70 Land Bank candidate properties were identified on initial tax foreclosure list in fall 2022. Currently, only two vacant and abandoned properties remain.



# GIS Tax Arrears Survey



- Planning Department Staff developed and deployed a survey utilizing GIS software and a phone application
- 304 properties with tax arrears on sewer or water in the County were surveyed
- Final Report will be completed in the Spring
- County Planning undertook project as a test run for new GIS software in December/January.
- Grew out of need to quantify how many demo candidates were left in universe of tax foreclosures.

# GIS Tax Arrears Survey



- 304 Properties Total Surveyed – At least one year back in taxes as of fall 2022 and on municipal water or sewer
- 57 Potential Demolition Candidates
- 37 parcels are vacant lots (developable)
- 79 potentially unoccupied or vacant buildings
- 278 acres were identified as vacant lots/fields with no improvements and vacant or potentially vacant homes and buildings. (Village of Ovid is 256 acres)
- 70 Land Bank candidates identified at the start of foreclosure. Two are currently still on the list.
- Picture is of a property in the Hamlet of Willard that chronically is on the foreclosure list and comes off every year. Many properties like this.
- Property tax delinquency is an overall indicator of household economic instability. This study only focused on vacant and abandoned homes. A full housing plan may investigate strategies to get homeowners caught up on taxes and able to stay in their homes.

# Legal Tools to Deal with Vacant and Abandoned Properties

- § 1111-a. Expedited foreclosure proceedings for vacant and abandoned residential real property
- Must adopt and institute a Vacant Property Registry Ordinance (VPRO)
- County would be able to foreclose on certified vacant and abandoned properties after one (1) year of unpaid taxes.
- Article 19-A. Special Proceeding to Convey Title to Abandoned Dwelling to City, Town, Village
- When a problem abandoned property is current on its taxes but fits other abandonment definitions, a municipality can file a lawsuit to claim title to the property.
- Normally filed by City, Town, or Village. Seneca County may be able to file lawsuit because it enforces the uniform building code
- Commonly used for “zombie” properties.

Only confirmed vacant and abandoned properties are candidates for expedited foreclosure or article 19-A having no occupants or responsible owners. Occupied buildings with homeowners, renters, or businesses not eligible.



# Seneca County Housing Needs Assessment

- Seneca County Awarded \$50,000 CDBG community planning grant from NYS Homes and Community Renewal
- Expected Completion May 2023
- Effects of the Covid-19 Pandemic on the housing market and homelessness are being examined
- Will include a market study providing information on the total inventory, affordability, and attainability of housing in the County
- Will include limited recommendations for next steps
- Will not be a full “housing plan” further analysis and community engagement will be necessary to create a full housing plan or strategy
- FLRLBC as a result of the Housing Needs Assessment process is creating new partnerships in coordination with DHS and Mental Health with FLACRA and Lakeview Health Services to identify and develop new supportive and transitional housing opportunities

# Immediate Next Steps

Activity	Timeline
Expected Award Announcement of HCR Land Bank Initiative Phase 2 funds	April
Expected Award Announcement of EPA Brownfield Assessment Grant	April or May
Execute Grant Agreement Contract with HCR for LBI Phase 2	May
BOS Approve Transfer of 2 Properties to FLRLBC from Tax Foreclosure List	May or June
Closing Date to Transfer Properties is Scheduled when HCR Completes Environmental Review	June
Brownfield Agreement with SC, FLRLBC, DEC, and Comptroller Fully Executed	Expected Any Day

# Questions/Comments?

Remaining slides are for  
general information/reference.

# Full List of 2022 Projects

For Reference

# 33 Taylor Ave, Waterloo

## Demolition and New Construction





# 1372 Prospect Street, Willard Demolition and Pre-Development





# 8388 Knight Street, Interlaken Demolition and Pre-Development





# 2271 E. Seneca Street, Lodi Demolition and Pre-Development





# 2261 E. Seneca Street, Lodi Demolition to Side-Lot Sale



No picture available. Lot was not developable due to proximity to creek bed behind combined with width. Placing a new house with a well would have been challenging.