

# Finger Lakes Regional Land Bank Corporation

Seneca County Board of Supervisors Meeting  
November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2017



# Current Land Bank Activities

- First four (4) properties
- 3 Demolitions
- 1 Rehab
- 2 properties transferring to Seneca County Habitat for Humanity
- 1 now vacant lot to be subdivided and sold to neighbors
- 1 now vacant lot to be sold by application

# 5172 Route 414, Varick



Empty lot to be sold by application



# 3529 Route 89, Seneca Falls (Canoga)



Vacant lot to be subdivided and sold to nearest neighbors



# 33 Taylor Ave, Waterloo



Vacant lot being sold to Seneca County  
Habitat for Humanity for residential new  
build



# 2320 County Road 139, Ovid



Property and improvements to be sold to Seneca County Habitat for Humanity for renovations

# Impacts

- Demolitions remove sources of blight and increase community character
- Demolitions remove current and future opportunities for properties to become low-quality rentals and risky rent-to-own situations
- Rehabs create residential units that are safe, decent, sanitary, suitable and affordable
- Rehabs and new construction partnering with Habitat for Humanity creates stable future tax revenue for local municipalities
  - Roughly \$3,300 in taxes per year
  - 30 year mortgage financed through Habitat and Generations Bank
  - \$99,000 per rehab paid in taxes over next 30 years

# Future Land Bank Activities

- Attorney General Funding through 2018
  - \$500,000 grant to be disbursed throughout 4 quarters of next year
- Acquire roughly 10 vacant and abandoned properties from county prior to tax auction
- Demolish 8
- Rehab 2
- Seeking donations and discount sales of distressed properties to invest in



# Zombie Properties

- “Zombie Properties” usually refer to properties where the bank foreclosure process was initiated forcing the residents to move out, and the foreclosure process is cancelled or stalled, leaving a bank owned vacant and abandoned property with no obvious caretaker, yet taxes remain current.
- Some zombie properties are updated with the clerks office that they are bank owned, some are not.
- Extent of problem unknown in Seneca County
- Anecdotally, we know there are distressed properties with no obvious owner or caretaker

# NYS Zombie Property Law

- RPAPL 1308 - 1310 (Real Property Actions and Proceeding Law)
- 1) Sets legal definitions of zombie properties
- 2) Sets an obligation for mortgagee to maintain
- 3) Creates a Zombie Property Registry
  - Banks and mortgage servicers must update registry of vacant or abandoned properties within 21 business days of learning the occupancy status
  - Registry contains up to date contact information for loan servicing agent in charge of property
  - Access to registry is reserved for the highest public officials of a municipality : sub-logins can be made for employees

# RPAPL 19-a

- Mechanism to transfer abandoned residential properties to municipality
- Properties must be found to be abandoned by the codes department
- Court proceedings – notifying parties with interest in property
- Court after due proceedings court can rule to transfer title of property to the county
- Residential properties the county receives title through 19-a can be transferred to the land bank and for demolition or rehab

# Next Steps

- Resolution granting the Chairman of the Board of Supervisors to be designated as the public official with authority to create a log-in for the entire county
- Any public official can make separate log-in if they so choose
- Zombie properties found to be out of compliance with the maintenance requirements of mortgagees can be held accountable using the registry
- Zombie properties that are deteriorated far beyond repair may be candidates to be transferred to the county under 19-a