

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL – FEBRUARY 25, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by Council Member Joseph L. Allen at 7:00 P.M. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Mr. Allen called upon Rev. Bill Levering, First Reformed Church, to deliver the Invocation.

Mr. Allen then called upon Jason Planck to lead the Pledge of Allegiance.

The City Clerk called the roll and the following members of the City Council answered to being present:

Present – Councilmembers Joseph L. Allen, Denise K. Brucker,
Mark W. Blanchfield, Gary R. McCarthy, Thomas
Della Sala and Barbara Blanchard

Absent - Council President Margaret C. King

Also Present – Commissioner of General Services Carl Olsen, City Clerk
Carolyn Friello and Corporation Counsel L. John
Van Norden, Esq.

PUBLIC HEARINGS:

1. On Local Law Intro. #2-2008 amending Chapter 168-5 of the City Code to define the content of the required Landlord Registration Statement.

Mr. Allen invited all who wished to speak on Public Hearing #1 to come forward (7:30 P.M.). Seeing no speakers, Mr. Allen declared the public hearing closed (7:31 P.M.).

2. Relating to the proposed Comprehensive Plan and its components.

Mr. Allen invited all who wished to speak on Public Hearing #2 to come forward (7:31 P.M.). The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Carolyn Meyers, Schenectady resident, stated that many of the Union Triangle resident's recommendations are in the plan except Union College. We would like to know about their long term plans.

Angelo Serafini, 3724 Carman Road, spoke in regard to Parcel #60.61-1-5.12, Kings Road & Manga Drive. He is requesting that the above property zoning be changed to the same zoning class that we have next to this parcel. This

would allow us to build a multi-family residence that is consistent with what we have already constructed in Angelina Estates. This request would allow us to finish the entrance to our project. Our entrance is similar to Graystone Apartments on the corner of Kings Road and Court Royale. As you know, we take great pride in our buildings and have made a very large investment in that area.

Portia Alston, 335 Hulett Street, spoke in regard to the Jerry Burrell Park. Housing is a good idea – it may improve the area, but, we need more lighting in and around Paige Street. The Jerry Burrell Park needs more facilities and security cameras. If the park is cleaned up, so will the neighborhood.

Charles P. Steiner, 306 State Street, spoke in regard to the proposed Sign Regulations in the Zoning Ordinance Revisions. It is the understanding of the Chamber of Schenectady County, and the undersigned business owners that the City of Schenectady's Zoning Ordinance includes a proposed revision. Article IX-264-62 and 264-88 state that pole signs, presently located and erected legally on the property of a business, will be required to be removed by the owner before December 1, 2010. We, the undersigned are requesting that the new proposed sign regulations (264-68, Nonconforming signs A) be revised. We believe it is vital that the new regulations allow for present business owners, with legally installed pole signs under the City of Schenectady's current regulations, to be legally granted continuation of use until the business ceases operations or is sold to a new owner. This request is most reasonable. The present pole signs in the City of Schenectady have complied with all existing sign regulations. Forcing removal will result in a significant hardship for businesses, particularly those smaller in size. Business owners already face a growing list of financial challenges. Why add costs that do not exist for those choosing to do business in surrounding towns and villages? Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Glock, 712 State Street, c/o Family Tire & Auto Service, spoke in regard to the pole signs. Our signs was applied for and legally installed and permitted by the city at great expense. The impact of this legislation is horrendous. It would cost me \$8,500.00, plus tear up a new asphalt driveway. Please consider the ramification of this legislation. The only people who will be happy about this legislation will be the Sign Companies and not one of them is a Schenectady business.

Katherine Delain, 214 Liberty Street, said – I did not see a plan for including the police presence in Vale. What's intended for increased security? We need to protect Vale Cemetery and the Park.

Jason Planck, 208 Jackson Ave., stated that Oregon Ave. is parkland and shouldn't be developed. Anything in the Comprehensive Plan should go back to the City Council for approval to safeguard the neighborhood's interests.

James Carnahan, 737 St. David's Lane, said – I am writing to express my objections to the proposed change in zoning of the Nott Street Industrial Park (Alco Site) from industrial to waterfront development and to offer suggestions for alternative utilization of the property. I am the owner of Edison Analytical Laboratories, Inc., a small technology business that has been in leased space at the Alco site since 2002. I was previously employed at the GE Global Research Center as a Senior Scientist. I currently utilize the equipment and revenues from the analytical business to support my research efforts in sensors, energy efficient lighting, nano-materials and alternative fuels. The long-term plan for my company was to take any economically useful inventions and hire employees to begin scale-up and manufacturing in the industrial park. This arrangement would permit continued operation of Edison Analytical while permitting close supervision and technical support of the new operations. The proposed changes in zoning would permit my current operation as a non-conforming use but would prohibit any growth and expansion of our activities into the adjacent buildings. In addition, per my reading of the plan for the site provided by Preferred Real Estate Investments, Inc., my business and nine others in Building 301 would be displaced by a parking lot. Moving a large laboratory business is a complex, time consuming and very expensive operation and I would necessarily have to examine all options if events led to a forced move. Outside of my own business interest, I feel that it is a great mistake for the city to take this property by spot zoning it such that the owners cannot retain or realize the inherent value of the industrial park. I would like to comment on the proposed development and offer alternative uses for this property that will maintain current jobs and offer opportunities for future business growth in Schenectady. The waterfront focus of the proposed project looks great in the architect's renderings with happy couples walking the tree-lined esplanade and trendy restaurants, but this is upstate New York and that riverfront will be deserted for the six months of cold weather. How much use is made of the current Riverside Park or even the riverfront near SCCC? Shouldn't we first develop the riverfront access near SCCC, which is close to the downtown center and has a large available parking lot that could support heavy use on weekends and perhaps summer evenings? The city likely will not have the resources to properly maintain such a facility. I noticed recently that we currently don't even remove snow from the existing bike path when observed at the Nott Street crossing. Will the longer Riverfront Park become an urban wasteland during the cold months? From a commercial standpoint, it is difficult enough to

successfully operate a restaurant or bar in Schenectady. What water-focused business will want to invest and locate in a seasonal location with 6 months of beneficial operation? Also, if a successful mix of housing, waterfront businesses and restaurants were to be placed on the Alco site, will this newer, attractive destination detract from the current very positive Proctors-State Street growth? The distance between the West end of the Alco site and State Street is too great for walking, especially in the winter, so development of an isolated downtown destination could conceivably detract from the current downtown center. I propose that you focus renewal efforts on the core downtown and retain the industrial zoning for the Alco site as well as the South side of Erie to the railroad and from Nott Street to Freeman's Bridge. This would make that segment between the railroad and the river East of Nott Street the industrial part of town. If we are offended by the view of the active steelyard and older buildings, a simple solution would be State or local funding to install a beam on the North side of Erie and plant mixed evergreens along both sides from the bridge to Nott Street to screen the industrial properties. This would not impact the current or planned industrial uses of the site and would also be a possible route for an extension of the bike path to Freeman's bridge and thus Glenville and Maxon Road extension. The Metroplex document titled "Alco Redevelopment Project" of February 26, 2007 asserts that the Alco site is underutilized and that the proposed plan will expand employment opportunities. Three of the largest buildings, for a total of 321,500 square feet, on the site are fully occupied with 11 active businesses with parts of others used for storage. This does not count the 9 businesses in Building 301. The park currently has 21 employers plus an unknown number in the separately owned Building 306. These businesses hire local people with a wide range of skills. I don't know the total employment in the Alco site but examining the Google image of the park, which appears to have been taken last Summer, I counted 153 cars on the site and around 301 Nott Street. Even if they were all single-occupancy commuters that number doesn't count the few people I have seen who walk and cycle to work from nearby neighborhoods or take the bus and those in Building 306 that park in the Siemens parking lot. I believe that by leaving the zoning as-is, employment at the park can be increased and that there are several opportunities to bring economic benefits to the city and perhaps improve the appearance of the industrial zone.

1. **AMD technology spin-offs.** The planned arrival of AMD in Luther Forest will, as they have done in every FAB plant location, draw suppliers to the region. I currently provide analytical services for AMD at other sites and plan to expand my analytical business to service their local needs. Many of the support businesses will locate in Saratoga County close to the AMD plant. However, Metroplex could partner with the owners of the park to attract some

of these high-tech support jobs to our community, perhaps replacing some of the less attractive site buildings in the process.

2. **Wind turbine production.** The welcome announcement of the new GE Wind Energy jobs suggests another use for the Alco site. Building 320 is 900' long and 175' wide and has a full complement of overhead and Jib cranes that would easily support the manufacture and testing of wind turbine blades. Currently, these fiberglass/resin blades are approaching 40-50 meters in length and along with the taller steel support towers are becoming increasingly difficult to transport over the road. If we were to establish or attract an existing blade fabricator to locate in Building 320, the longest blades, best used on marine wind turbines, could be shipped worldwide using the adjacent barge canal. This shipping procedure is currently used effectively by Dimension Fabricators on Maxon Road.

There is also an opportunity for local and regional synergy, with GE providing the gearbox/generator, STS steel perhaps building the towers, Dimension Fabricators, the foundation reinforcement and Fiberglass Industries of Amsterdam providing the glass fiber. one customer of mine, a startup company in Technology Drive, Cyclics, Inc. has a proprietary thermoplastic resin material that has been demonstrated for blades that would be recycled rather than put in a landfill as is the practice for current thermo set blades that fatigue or crack in use. Cyclics, Inc. is currently looking to expand its production capabilities in this region and expansion into the Alco site would be beneficial due to their laboratory and headquarters proximity on Technology Drive. A cooperative activity as described would surely attract State and Federal funding for "Green" initiatives and would be a step to restore the old Schenectady motto to some truth.

3. **New York Contemporary Art Museum. NYCAM.**

I visited the MASS MOCA (Museum of Contemporary Art) site in North Adams last year and was struck by the similarity of the building architecture to some (not all) of the buildings in the Alco site. The operators of that old factory site have generated an exciting cultural attraction that by news reports has brought 120,000 yearly visitors to the city. Most of those visitors got there by car. We have the beneficial situation of better major road links and especially, a direct rail link to the largest market of art consumers in the US, NYC, with the Amtrak station only a few blocks from the site. Several of the buildings could serve as dramatic galleries for monumental art and some of the sculptors might even provide work for our two local steel fabricators. Other smaller buildings could house studios, classrooms and, of course, the café and gift shop. Go visit or look at the MASS MOCA web site – www.massmoca.org and see the similarity to our own

hidden treasure. This conversion of some of the historic spaces could also be an economical path to summer use of the riverfront with the protection that private stewardship could confer. If this museum option were in play, the site currently occupied by Building 308 (West corner of Alco at Front Street) would be an excellent new home for the Schenectady Museum so that it would integrate into the museum complex. Again, I urge you to retain the current industrial zoning for the Alco site to permit the broadest choice of options for the benefit of Schenectady's citizens. If eventually a decision is made to develop the property as a mixed-use residential/waterfront development, then that would be the time to change the zoning designation.

Owen Cole, 738 Swaggertown Road, Scotia, NY, stated that he opposes the changes to the Sign Ordinance. Our sign has been in place for years and poses no hazard. Perhaps a grandfather clause is appropriate.

Mary Patricia Rush, 117 Oxford Place, said – I have lived at this address for more than 25 years. My family and I made a commitment to the city when we moved here; our children were educated in the city school system, and my husband and I have served on various city committees and commissions over the years. We are also co-founders of our neighborhood association, the MOB (Maryland, Oxford Place and Brierwood). I am immediate past president of ECOS: the Environmental Clearinghouse. Last year, I co-founded (with Nancy Peterson of Keyes St.) a coalition of environmental and other organizations with a concern for climate change and global warming. This coalition is made up of groups like the Schenectady County League of Women Voters, ECOS: the Environmental Clearinghouse, the Green Sanctuary of First Unitarian Society of Schenectady, SCEAC (the Schenectady County Environmental Advisory Council) the Science Club of SCCC, and Interfaith Power and Light. This coalition sponsored two rallies in 2007 inspired by Bill McKibben's Step It Up campaign against global warming. We are sponsoring a community forum on green building technology on March 12 at Proctor's from 7:00 P.M. to 9:00 P.M., and all are invited to this free program. My testimony on the draft city-wide plan is almost exclusively complimentary. I commend the city for including in the city-wide plan very specific recommendations regarding energy efficiency, which of course, is so closely related to mitigations of climate change as to be two sides of the same coin. In 2005, Mayor Stratton was among our nation's Mayors to sign the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, which is the U.S. Mayors' effort to encourage the Federal Government to enact policies and programs to meet or beat the target of reducing global warming pollution to 7% below 1990 levels by 2012 (the Kyoto targets). Many of the recommendations of the Mayors'

Climate Protection Agreement have been included in the proposed city-wide plan, such as making energy efficiency a priority, maintaining healthy urban forests, promote transportation options such as bicycle trails, and other efforts to reduce energy-wasting sprawl. For these inclusions, I commend the Planning Department and those who had input into this plan. There is, however, one element that I (and others) think can and should be strengthened. On Page 35 of the draft plan, action 2, the tasks include: consider adopting green design standards for new development, and develop green building standards...as market conditions allow. The U.S. Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement is much more specific: **Practice and promote sustainable building practices using the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Program or a similar system.** I ask that the language of the US Mayors' Climate Protection Agreement be used instead of the two statements from the draft plan as quoted above. It is specific language, referring to measurable standards for energy efficient or "green" construction.

Steve Strichman, Zoning Officer, 1108 Ardsley Road, said – After hearing tonight's comments, I think that we can happily declare the Schenectady 2020 Comprehensive Plan a success. The effort that has taken its course over the past 3 years has included: 3 citywide meetings; 30 individual neighborhood meetings; numerous presentations to different individuals, neighborhoods, religious and civic groups through the city; and countless hours on behalf of the City's Planning Commission, BZA, HDC and Staff. It includes zoning changes to roughly 1/3 of the city or 8,000 tax parcels. The Neighborhood plans and Citywide plan each have approximately 15 action items and 50 implementation tasks for over 700 proposed actions. The new Zoning Ordinance has made hundreds, if not 1000 changes. All told the new Comprehensive Plan introduces nearly 10,000 changes to help the city move forward, improve neighborhoods and commercial districts, increase home-ownership, and improve our fiscal stability. Tonight, we heard from residents, relating to a lot of changes. Out of 10,000, I would say that isn't too bad. I look forward to meeting with the Council over the next few weeks to discuss the comments made tonight and to make any changes you deem appropriate. This plan helps to shape the city's future, and acts as a front line of defense against development that does not enhance our community. We receive daily requests for new development and subdivisions that adhere to our old Zoning Ordinance, but, they may be in opposition to what our residents desire that is enacted by our new Zoning Ordinance. I would like to urge a swift resolution of the outstanding issues, and adoption of the Schenectady 2020 Comprehensive Plan on March 24.

Greg Sauer, Washington Ave., said – Like any plan, it's not perfect, but, I hope that any problems will be taken into consideration. The City Council needs to put in place the structure and metrics to turn the plan into reality.

Frederic Lee, 706 Stanley Street, said – I think relinquishing the parkland for building is dangerous. Look at demolishing some of our boarded up houses. It's impossible to measure the impact of the parkland unit; it's gone.

Gloria Kishton, Schenectady resident, stated that the Schenectady Heritage Foundation commends the city on a great job. Most of the plan is very good. The Historic District laws were improved. The interior of the buildings need to be preserved – like Proctor's Institutional property – the restrictions need to be tightened. We would like to see the Historic District boundaries expanded.

Linda Crandall, 1601 Bradley Street, said – I have sent my comments to Steve Strichman. We are concerned about institutional planning and their impacts on the neighborhoods. Oregon Ave. needs to be cleaned up, not developed.

Mark Townsend, 315 Sullivan Road, spoke for Victoria Cooper. In regard to Jerry Burrell Park, Steve Strichman has been very informative and cooperative. After discussing Burrell Park, I was surprised to see that Habitat for Humanity wanted to develop land by the park. The residents don't have enough information to make an informed decision. I suggest an office in the park, staffed with constant supervision, create a walking exercise around the park and improve the lighting.

Mark Townsend, 315 Sullivan Road, said – Please do whatever you can for Vale Park and the cemetery. It's important for historical reasons and also, the State Law says that if the cemetery goes bankrupt, the city has to take it over.

Jeff Clark, 1957 Foster Ave., stated that Habitat for Humanity wants to build on the lots for owner-occupied housing around Jerry Burrell Park. We would like to add 4 more houses on existing lots. We believe its quality – not quantity, as far as Jerry Burrell Park goes. I have pictures of the park that show its condition and some work that would be beneficial. We feel that this is a good use for the property, therefore, it shouldn't be rezoned.

Vince Riggi, 2138 Campbell Ave., said – I am opposed to the development of any parkland. It's important to be kept as is and improve what we have.

James Livingston, Union Triangle Neighborhood, stated that Institutional zoning doesn't belong in the plan. There's a flaw in the process between the neighborhood plan and the zoning regulations. Institutional zoning is wrong. The neighborhoods should have input in the union's plans throughout the campus, not just 150 feet.

Frank Maurizio, 1121 Lexington Ave., said – I'm here to speak in strong support the Comprehensive Plan as presented. While there is certainly always room for improvement to any idea and proposal – and I have every faith that this body might, in fact, enhance what we have here – the beauty of the Comprehensive Plan is that it reflects the hopes and vision of the citizens of Schenectady. As you well know, the Comprehensive Plan that you are considering is the product of months and months of hearings, discussions, interviews and public meetings. Hundreds of Schenectadians took advantage of the opportunity to voice their concerns and to share their ideas. And, by and large, that input – derived from a very open, inclusive process – is in here. Now, we certainly can discuss whether an old, oil-soaked garage is our idea of a park or not. And we certainly can consider whether some of our venerable institutions should be held to different standard; I have my opinions on both. But those discussions should not derail or delay adoption and implementation of this plan. For the past few years, we have all been enjoying – in fact, celebrating – downtown's resurgence, as we should. What's happening downtown borders on a miracle. But the elephant in the room during these celebrations has always been: What about the other parts of the city – the neighborhoods where people live and work – they need our attention too? Well, this Comprehensive Plan is the answer to that very appropriate question. Zoning and neighborhood issues must be addressed as the next step in Schenectady's revitalization. And this Comprehensive Plan provides the roadmap to do just that. It's professional; it's thorough; and, again, it reflects the will of the people. Finally, I want to congratulate the City Council and the administration – especially Steve Strichman of the Development Department – for spearheading this important effort. It's indicative of the progressive, forward-thinking attitude that has turned our city around. Thank you for that and thank you for this time.

Cathy Lewis, 1164 Van Curler Ave., commended everyone that worked on the Comprehensive Plan. We need to be careful on expanding the parks. We need to improve the existing parks. I'm excited about the projects, like the townhouses, condo's and assisted living facilities. This is a living document. It has been 37 years since the zoning laws have been changed. One day after it's approved, you can change it. I would like to see a detailed procedure so that everyone understands it. We don't want it to be 2020 or 2045 before it's revised.

Peter Campito, PO Box 712, Latham, NY, stated that CRM properties is the only building that is not owned by the Schenectady Industrial Corporation. We are concerned that our current use may be restrictive to our tenants. It may create a non-conforming use for us. We embrace, in principal, the rezoning of the park, but, we don't want our tenants to pay the price. We ask that the wording be injected so we have a comprehensive grandfathering of the use.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady resident, stated that she is opposed to any development of parkland.

Tony Cady, Schenectady resident, said – We would like to see Jerry Burrell Park improved and revitalized. We would like that park treated with respect. This plan is 2020 and what the neighborhood will look like then – that's our concern. The park needs to be treated with respect.

The following speakers sent their statements in or Faxed it to the City Clerk's Office.

L.H. Buhmaster, Chairman of the 1st National Bank of Scotia, NY, spoke in regard to 120 Erie Blvd., changes to the Zoning Ordinance. The 1st National Bank of Scotia opened its Erie Blvd. Office in 1976. Our bank's trademark sign is placed in front of the bank as it is in our other branch bank locations. It is double faced and internally lighted. The sign is located in an industrial zone area and I assume that the new zoning will be M-2 (although the map on the website is difficult to read). Its height, I believe is 16 feet at its highest point. As I read the new Zoning Ordinance, the sign would have to be removed by December 1, 2010. No other municipality we operate in has required us to remove our trademark sign. Is the General Electric Company sign being treated in the same manner? Please rewrite the sign portion of the ordinance to allow signs like ours to remain as is, as long as the businesses continue to operate in Schenectady.

Ray and Jeff LeGere, 1462 Erie Blvd., spoke in regard to the proposed rezoning of our properties at 17 Mohawk Street. For the record, we would like to let our feelings known regarding the proposed zone change from industrial to waterfront mixed use. It is my understanding that under the current proposal, our current use would be grandfathered, but with a limit of 10% for any future building expansion. This would limit our expansion to approximately 1,000 for one building and 1,800 on another. Given the fact that we collectively own approximately 2 acres, we have plenty of room for expansion. While we support and encourage the use of the riverfront as envisioned, this could limit the development of our asset until the riverfront plan is fully realized. We hereby

request that should this proposal be adopted, we be allowed to expand my property under the guidelines currently in effect. We are excited about the plans, and look forward to working with you in the future.

Mark F. Wagoner stated that this letter is regarding the new 4 unit building proposed by Angelo Serafini. I have a home at the corner of Queen Philomena Blvd. and I believe the zoning for a new 4 unit building would be an asset to our community. Mr. Serafini keeps all of his properties in outstanding condition and I am sure this property would be no exception. I think you as board members should approve this rezoning. Schenectady County can only benefit in having property owners like Mr. Serafini in the community.

Mr. & Mrs. William Ventzio, 3078 McDonald Ave., said – I am writing to inform you that I support the rezoning request by the Serafini family to build a 4-unit building on the empty lot at the corner of Menga Drive and Kings Road. The Serafini family has been my neighbor for over 20 years. The apartments next to my house are well maintained and are a valuable asset to the neighborhood. I am sure all my neighbors feel the same way I do and support the rezoning request. Let's keep upgrading the area.

James A. Stori, President of STS Steel, Inc., said – Please accept the following comments for public record on proposed zoning changes. We are opposed to the proposed zoning change of the Nott Street Industrial Park (former ALCO facility) to Waterfront Development C3 and to the proposed restrictions on use of existing facilities. Our business has been operating in the ALCO Industrial Park since 1989 as a commercial/industrial user. We have invested approximately \$2,000,000.00 improving and constructing buildings in the park and have grown from \$5,000,000.00 to \$21,000,000.00 over the last 20 years. Preventing us from continuing our growth on this site would have a significant financial impact on our firm. We believe that we are an important part of the industrial history and current economy of Schenectady and that the ALCO Industrial Park is part of that history. We employ approximately 65 people with a payroll of approximately \$4,000,000.00. According to the December 2007 issue of Trade and Industry Development, “the average metal fabrication worker generates about \$150,000.00 per year in total economic benefit to the community”. Based on those figures, our business contributes around \$9-10 million dollars to the local economy and provides jobs to a wide range of skill levels from entry-level laborers to professional engineers. We believe we can work with the city to make continued expansion of our business fit within the vision for a more attractive park. We moved to Schenectady when Schenectady wanted manufacturers in the park; we did everything we promised when we moved here; we added jobs, improved the

building and expanded employment. We are concerned that we will suffer financially if we are not allowed to grow at our current location.

Julia T. Lewis, 215 Sixteenth Street, said – I have again reviewed the City of Schenectady Comprehensive Plan 2020. My comments are my own and specific to the Bellevue Neighborhood.

Page 8 – Code enforcement. We already have a Bellevue Officer in place and I feel that there needs to be more accountability built into these positions. Just to add bodies does not necessarily improve enforcement. I know that this may not be your function but the entire plan should have checks and balances in place both to accomplish stated goals and implement future ones.

Page 11 – Create off-street public parking throughout the neighborhood in order to improve visibility from side streets, enable street cleaning to be more efficient both in summer and in the winter. If this is not possible, create more one-way streets and/or one-sided parking.

Page 12 – In creating gateway and streetscape improvements, do NOT interfere with movement of traffic and visibility.

Page 13 – RE: traffic calming feature. Do NOT lessen the visibility or ability of properly cleaning these intersections as stated above.

Thank You for allowing the residents to comment so freely on this project.

Michael D. Tamasi, P&T Administrative Unit, State Campus Bldg. 12, Room 374, Albany, NY, e-mailed the following on the Follow-up Comprehensive Plan. Since a public hearing is scheduled for tonight on the City's 2020 Plan, can you advise me of the status of the changes that I recommended below. If you could get back to me (e-mail or phone call) sometime today, it would be appreciated and likely save me a trip down to City Hall tonight.

You and Margaret did a great job at last night's presentation. As I mentioned last night and you acknowledged a change is in order, under Goal Five, Action 4, in the second bullet under tasks, the last words "set back from the fairway" should be removed from the final City Comprehensive Plan. In addition, since this document will be a viable plan until some point in the future, possible several years from now, I think the plan should make every attempt to avoid subsequent misinterpretations or reinterpretations as to what was intended by the creators of the plan. Therefore, since the above referenced section indicates where residential development may be considered, in the alternate, it only further clarifies the plan's intent to include where residential development is not to be considered. This could be accomplished by including a statement in the same section above as follows:

The treed/wooded parcel of the Schenectady Municipal Golf Course land at the end of Park and Daniels Ave., bounded by Oregon Ave., Golf Ave. Extension, and the 9th and 18th fairways, shall remain part of the Golf Course and as such, will not be subject to residential development.

My thoughts are if you are going to include what is subject to development, conversely we should include what is not included as being subject to development. This is particularly important given the common boundaries that each parcel share, which could leave room for different interpretations of what was intended. Please let me know if you think this is a reasonable point that can be addressed by including this statement in the final City Comprehensive Plan. Thank you.

Lyn Gordon, President, Stockade Association, sent in a letter on the Comprehensive Plan. Let me first congratulate you and your colleagues on the superb effort that you have done on the 2020 plan. I and many other residents of the city feel and see a building momentum for a positive change in Schenectady after many years of decay. The Stockade Association appointed a committee to review the Final Draft of the Stockade Neighborhood plan and we find that most of our concerns and issues have been addressed. We anticipate working with you and your colleagues to turn the 11 Stockade goals into reality. We do have the following observations which we ask you and the city to consider. They are:

- In the area of infrastructure, it would seem that we need a “dig once” strategy. We have the oldest infrastructure in the city. All too often, we see the city repave and then watch as National Grid, Time Warner, Verizon or the City Sewer or Water Department tear up the streets over the next 18 months. It would seem that it would be in everyone’s best interest and also the lowest over all cost to coordinate a block by block program to replace, and install buried utilities. We recognize that to be a longer term project, but, with some creative funding, it should be possible to start with the goal of completing the Stockade in 10 years. This effort would also require us to come to grips sooner rather than later with design guidelines for sidewalks and street lighting. We believe this strategy should be reflected in the plan and are eager to work on it with the city.
- The plan calls for trying to increase the amount of parking at the park turnarounds. There is no doubt that lack of parking is a serious problem for the neighborhood, but, this particular solution is likely to have unintended consequences. The turnarounds are somewhat isolated locations that are

used to conduct illegal business or to create disturbances. Until increased security measures (improved lighting, video surveillance, etc.) are in place and demonstrably effective, no expansion of parking at the turnarounds should be contemplated.

- The addition of docks to Riverside Park is very controversial. Some people are supportive of a facility that would facilitate canoe launching and tie-up. There is considerable resistance for a power boat launch facility. There is no parking and the turnarounds cannot accommodate boat trailers. Any proposal about docking should be thoroughly vetted with the neighborhood and would best be done on a trial basis.

If you have any questions, you can contact me at 370-4324, or Greg Sauer, the committee chair, at 393-8081. Again, thank you for your efforts on our behalf.

Louis H. Buhrmaster, Vice President of Schenectady Industrial Corporation, 301 Nott Street, sent in a letter regarding the Comprehensive Plan. I believe all of you are aware that the Schenectady Industrial Corporation currently owns and operates, as the Landlord, the Nott Street Industrial Park, commonly referred to as the Alco site. I am sure that you are all aware that the proposed new Zoning Ordinance for the City of Schenectady, promulgated in conjunction with the City of Schenectady Comprehensive Plan 2020, proposes to change the zoning classification of the Nott Street Industrial Park from heavy industrial to a new classification – C-3 – Waterfront Development District. This reclassification will make virtually every current activity in the Nott Street Industrial Park a non-conforming use. Given the current situation, the proposed reclassification of the Nott Street Industrial Park is premature and thus ill-advised. Many of you are probably unaware that Schenectady Industrial Corporation was incorporated May 7, 1945, the same day, incidentally, that Germany surrendered to the Allies, to promote the transition of Schenectady's Industrial output from war time to peacetime purposes. The initial shareholders of Schenectady Industrial Corporation acquired various properties in the industrial zone of Schenectady as companies here either scaled back or ceased business operations altogether to utilize these properties as incubators for new business ventures. After the American Locomotive Company ceased manufacturing operations in 1969, Schenectady Industrial Corporation acquired the Alco site. From the 1970's until the mid-1990's, General Electric used the property and employed thousands of workers. After General Electric downsized and ultimately ceased operations altogether at the Alco site, Schenectady Industrial Corporation solicited smaller industrial and other business concerns to lease various portions of the property,

thus continuing to create employment opportunities within the City of Schenectady. These efforts nurtured a number of businesses over the years which, after enjoying the initial low overhead costs provided by the Nott Street Industrial Park, were able to grow efficiently and move on to other locations in the area. As an incubator for new businesses, Schenectady Industrial Corporation's mission has never changed. Its Board of Directors, as well as many of shareholders, continue to be business and community leaders committed to the economic well-being of the City of Schenectady. During its entire existence, Schenectady Industrial Corporation has neither sought nor received a single dollar of taxpayer support nor a single tax break to achieve its mission. In contrast, the City of Schenectady and associated taxing authorities continue to levy unreasonably high taxes on this property all out of proportion to its actual value. Schenectady Industrial Corporation recognizes that the city and Metroplex expressed a desire in February 2007, to transform the Alco site into the post-industrial use envisioned in the Comprehensive Plan 2020. The plans for redevelopment of this site, announced amid great fanfare a year ago, although lacking sufficient detail regarding the relocation of the 18 businesses located there, clearly lead Schenectady Industrial Corporation and the public at large to believe that the transition was imminent. Unfortunately, and for reasons not necessarily known to Schenectady Industrial Corporation, virtually nothing has been done in the last year to effectuate the transition of the Alco site from its current industrial use to the envisioned waterfront development district. No plans to offer promised relocation assistance to the existing businesses have been implemented. The proposed developer, Preferred Real Estate, ceased all communications with Schenectady Industrial Corporation last summer and returned all documents relating to the property. Based on recent newspaper articles, Metroplex has apparently now turned its attention for waterfront development to a location in Glenville (Daily Gazette, Feb. 15, 2008), and suggested that the 3 most important major projects are the Pizza King building, the new Golub headquarters and the vacant Schenectady International site on Broadway. (Daily Gazette, Feb. 20, 2008). Nothing is mentioned about the Alco site. Thus, despite the promises of imminent redevelopment, the reality of the Alco site situation is that Schenectady Industrial Corporation is providing, and apparently will for the foreseeable future continue to provide, space where its current business tenants and future business tenants may form and grow their enterprises. It is consequently unfair to Schenectady Industrial Corporation, and to those businesses which call the Nott Street Industrial Park home, to enact a Zoning Ordinance which effectively makes their activities illegal. The front page of the Daily Gazette on February 16, 2008 featured a picture of a worker at STS Steel, one of our tenants which employs 65, under the headline "N.Y. Factory Index Declines". The story reports that this company is busy making steel beams

and columns for a number of local and state projects. If enacted, the proposed ordinance will severely restrict the expansion of this and other existing businesses and apparently prohibit the industrial-related use of any structure which is now vacant. Even the current non-industrial uses of the property are severely impacted. Building 301 is the office building which sits at the entrance to the Nott Street Industrial Park at the corner of Nott Street and Erie Blvd. It is occupied by a number of tenants whose business activities are not of an industrial nature. Under proposed classification C-3, Subsection B (Permitted Uses), professional and business offices in excess of 3,000 square feet are prohibited on the first floor. Consequently, none of our existing first-floor tenants could in the future expand beyond 3,000 square feet. This provision would also prohibit us from leasing over 3,000 square feet on the first floor for a doctor's or attorney's office. This is just one example of how classification C-3 is premature and incompatible with the current and future use of our property. We believe there are serious constitutional and other legal issues associated with a plan to zone and tax this property into a truly vacant eyesore, and then to use the eminent domain power to transfer it to a private developer at some unspecified date in the future. Until the parties who plan to redevelop the Alco site into a non-industrial use actually acquire it, changing the zoning classification to a non-industrial use is obviously premature. Zoning classification C-3 for the Alco site presupposes that the property has already been taken for redevelopment, which is obviously not the case. As, when, and if these redevelopment plans progress to the point that they are a reality and not a dream, then the time to change the zoning classification will be appropriate. The City Council is respectfully requested to make the following changes to the proposed Zoning Ordinance:

1. Change the Alco site zoning classification from C-3 Waterfront Development District to M-2 Manufacturing and Warehouse District;
2. Change Schedule C: Proposed Lot Development Standards as it pertains to District M-2 so as to allow expansion of businesses located in M-2, consistent with the existing structures and without restriction as to percentage of building to be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or structurally altered and/or percentage of existing area for outdoor uses.
3. Alternatively, if the Alco site zoning classification is not changed from C-3 to M-2, then Article XII on non-conforming uses, buildings and structures should be revised with respect to zoning classifications C-3 and M-2 to allow expansion of business located near and consistent with the existing structures without restriction as to percentage of building to be enlarged, extended, reconstructed or structurally altered and/or percentage of existing area for outdoor uses. This provision should also be further revised with respect to C-3 and M-2 to provide

that restoration is to begin one year after settlement with any insurance carrier and that, due to the specialized nature of the buildings and equipment on the Alco site, no time limit should be placed on discontinued use of any buildings or premises.

Seeing no other speakers, Mr. Allen declared Public Hearing #2 closed at 8:30 P.M.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES:

Mrs. Brucker moved that the minutes of the City Council meeting of February 11, 2008 be approved as submitted by the City Clerk. It was seconded by Mr. McCarthy. Hearing no objections, Mr. Allen declared the minutes approved as submitted.

COMMUNICATIONS:

Official –

From the Mayor, a list of appointments.

From the Water Department, a letter accepting the bid of and awarding the contract to Gould Erectors & Riggers, Inc. for “Replacement Reactor Beams for the Wastewater Treatment Plants In-Vessel Composting Facility” in the amount of \$16,480.00.

General – None.

PETITIONS: None.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Mr. Blanchfield stated that the Finance Committee met; he spoke in regard to Agenda #5. There was an unfortunate deterioration in the beams at the Waste-Water Treatment Plant. Veolia Water will replace the siding after the beams are removed. Also Agenda Item #4, this contract was entered into with a “not to exceed number”. Everything that can be done in house will be.

Mr. McCarthy stated that the Public Safety Committee met and Commissioner Bennett presented his ongoing changes in administrative procedures that are being implemented in the department to deal with the Grand Jury report. I

compliment him on his ongoing work to address the problems. It's not going to happen in one day. We are working toward a department that we can all be proud of and function in a way it should.

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):

Mr. Allen invited all who wished to address the City Council on any item of the Legislative Agenda to come forward. Seeing no speakers, Mr. Allen declared the Privilege of the Floor on the Legislative Agenda closed.

INTRODUCTION OF AND ACTION UPON LOCAL LAWS, ORDINANCES & RESOLUTIONS:

Consent Agenda –

Resolution No. 2008-29	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-30	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-31	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-32	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-CS17	Adopted Unanimously

PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:

Mr. Allen invited all who wished to address the City Council on any matter of city business to come forward. The following speakers rose to be heard and their remarks are summarized:

Theresa Kline & Ernie Dzikowski, 1332 Lower Broadway – Loyal Order of the Moose, stated that the problem we have at this time is back taxes. It has become a problem and we are looking for help. We hope that the Council can take into consideration and help us get these reduced. We are also running a function to raise some of this money and Mayor Stratton and Ed Kosiur has offered to help us with it.

Linda Crandall stated that a zone change such as trying to develop Parkland is wrong (Submitted a petition) saying that the residents don't want that area

developed. I commend the city on curtailing paving of the parking lots. I would also like the developers responsible for preserving some trees when developing. I would like to see a “true tree program developed. I would like to see the process for Historic Designation streamlined. Finally, I would like to see a Citizens Committee involved in the Comprehensive Plan.

Harry Brand, 2108 Van Rensselaer Drive, asked – What’s happening to all the laws we have that are not enforced? Our city is deteriorating and we want to spend \$20,000,000.00 on Foster Ave. Congratulations to Mr. Olsen for the Winter Festival, perhaps, some day, we will get “Tuesday in the Park” back.

Gary Farkas, 1177 Sumner Ave., stated that we had our first Winter Festival and it was a great success. I want to thank everyone from the city for all their help.

Frank Maurizio, 1121 Lexington Ave., stated that I am here in my role as Chair of the Public Relations Committee of the City’s Energy Advisory Board. The EAB was created by the Council last year to study and make recommendations on energy efficiencies in the city as a way to reduce our carbon footprint. Municipalities across the nation – municipalities like Schenectady – are leading the way in efforts to combat global warming and to be responsible stewards of this planet. Our meetings are here at City Hall at 7:00 P.M., the second Thursday of every month and the public is invited. One of the initiatives on which we are currently working is to promote a community forum on “Greening our Schools”. It’s a discussion on ways to help our schools save energy and to ensure a healthy learning environment for our kids and their teachers and staff. The forum is scheduled for 7:00 P.M. on Monday, March 10th at Schenectady High School. It’s being co-sponsored by the Healthy Schools Network and the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority – NYSERDA – and Paul Tonko, the NYSERDA President and a longtime friend of Schenectady, is one of the featured speakers. This will be an important discussion and it’s not just for educators, environmental activists and policymakers. Anyone with children or grandchildren in school should be interested and should join us. Again, the “Greening Schools Community Forum” in on March 10th at 7:00 P.M. at Schenectady High School. For more information, you can call 462-0632 or go online to info@healthyschools.org. Thank you.

Vince Riggi, 2138 Campbell Ave., spoke in regard to the Crossing Guards. Maybe to attract better people, we need to upgrade the pay scale. I think they deserve more money. They are making \$8.65 an hour. You are not going to get a lot for that; \$12.00 an hour is not a lot. We have lost a lot of good Crossing Guards.

Katherine Delain, 214 Liberty Street, stated that Wednesday night is the Colonial Festival dinner for SACC. I am a little disappointed that the past members are not being honored. Also with this renaissance in the city, where are the jobs? Create jobs with decent salaries or people will begin leaving.

Jim Livingston, Schenectady resident, stated that on Union Ave. and University Place, there is a definite drug problem. Also, we have many code issues that are not being enforced. Do we have a "Grouper Law"? Is it enforced? The City Attorney refused to talk to me. Does he need to talk to me? Can he refuse to talk to me? I would like to know if he's going to speak to me?

Cathy Lewis, 1164 Fan Curler Ave., commended everyone involved in the Winter Festival. It was a tremendous success.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Mr. Allen declared the Privilege of the Floor on city business closed.

MISCELLANEOUS:

Ms. Blanchard stated that we are going to Troy to the year round Farmer's Market. We will leave this Saturday. We will meet in the First Baptist Church Parking Lot at 10:00 A.M. Anyone who is interested in coming, please call me or e-mail me. We are interested in a year round Farmer's Market in the city. Again, this Wednesday is the Colonial Festival Dinner to benefit Channel 16.

Mrs. Brucker said – Again, thank you to Carl Olsen and all the volunteers for making the Winter Festival a great success. I saw, not one child cry. I think everyone enjoyed being outside after being shut in all week. A special thanks to Mike DiLorenzo for coming in and making cotton candy. Everyone worked – no one got paid and all had a great time. Also, thanks to all the folks who came tonight and spoke or submitted comments on the Comprehensive Plan Public Hearing. We are headed in the right direction here. Lastly, I agree and I think that we need to do this – it's time, as a Council, to increase the salaries of the Crossing Guards.

Mr. Blanchfield complimented the speakers who spoke on the Comprehensive Plan. We got a lot of thoughtful comments, particularly, the Jerry Burrell Park and expanding rather than enhancing. It behooves us to take another look at that. Also, I appreciate the comments on the Sign Ordinance and we need to take another look at that. I plan to reach out to these people. If the cost is the only factor, we can come to a compromise. If there's other concerns, I would like to know. Also, the Winter Festival was tremendous. Thanks to Gary Farkas and the PTO. The spirit behind it was to get young people active in the winter and that's so positive. The more we can do to get people active in the park – it leads to a more wholesome environment. Congratulations to all involved in the Chili contest and all who passed out the Chili. Congratulations to Deanna's Café for the People Choice Award and the Stockade for the Judge's Choice.

Mr. Allen reminded all non-profits that the tax exemptions are due March 1st and the new garbage schedules are available at City Hall, the City Clerk's Office, Neighborhood Revitalization, the Tax Department and on-line.

Carl Olsen, Commissioner of General Services, said – Joe, you were an integral part of the planning of this. We put it together in about 4 weeks and I was very pleased with the results. Thanks to all the rest who participated in the Chili Challenge and donated 5 gallons of Chili each. Over 400 people sampled the Chili. The Schenectady Probation Department beat the City Trashes in Softball 7-4. Thanks to Plaine and Sons who provided ice bike racing and countless other vendors; we had some great local entertainment. In reality, the people who should be thanked are the people who volunteered and the organizers who gave of their time. Special thanks to the Mayor, City Council and the County for the roles they played. We can have the best programs in the world, if our residents don't come, they are not successful. Thanks also to Price Chopper, Vicki Horowitz, Carver Construction, Schenectady PBA, City Mission, D.A.R.E., Veola Water, Boy's and Girl's Club and Mike DiLorenzo who donated healthy sums of money to make our skating program possible. We are going to have a wrap up meeting to review everything and see if it can be made even better next week.

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ADJOURNMENT:

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Mr. Allen declared the meeting adjourned at 9:10 P.M.

A TRUE RECORD

**BY CAROLYN FRIELLO
CITY CLERK**