

**MINUTES OF THE REGULARLY SCHEDULED MEETING OF THE  
SCHENECTADY CITY COUNCIL – MARCH 10, 2008**

The meeting was called to order by Council President Margaret C. King at 7:00 P.M. in Room 209, City Council Chambers at City Hall.

Ms. King called upon Rev. Steven Clunn, First United Methodist Church, to deliver the Invocation.

Ms. King then called upon John Harrison 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, Mark W. Blanchfield,  
Gary R. McCarthy, Thomas Della Sala, Barbara Blanchard  
and Margaret C. King

Absent - Councilmember Denise K. Brucker

Also Present – Mayor Brian U. Stratton, City Clerk Carolyn Friello  
and Corporation Counsel L. John Van Norden, Esq.

At this point in the meeting, Mayor Brian U. Stratton presented his **“2008 STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS” – It is as follows:**

City Councilmembers, Rev. Clergy, our Commissioners and Department Heads with us this evening, and my fellow citizens of Schenectady...

Thank you for providing me the opportunity to present my State of the City Address for 2008. As I report to you this evening on the progress and objectives ahead, the message I bring is one of achievement and opportunity for our city. Tonight, I would like to not only speak of the many things we have achieved for our city by working together...I will outline the challenges that remain – and the opportunity now to build upon our successes to further strengthen Schenectady. Together, we have achieved much – and the State of our city is strong!

**Restoring Financial Integrity**

In just 4 years, we have restored our financial integrity from near ruin and neglect, to state of strength and respect – giving our citizens a genuine sense of hope for the future. We have recovered from the lowest Junk Bond credit rating in New York State left to us 4 years ago, rising back with hard work to the ranks of Investment Grade...and continuing to climb upward as we build financial strength and restore our reputation with creditors, investors...and with the public. We have gone from years of unrealistic,

unachievable budgeting --- to now living within our means with responsible, conservative and achievable spending plans we craft together, the last 2 producing a record fund balance surplus in every fund division. In fact, our preliminary examination of the ongoing 2007 audit, which will become official early next month, shows this positive trend will continue.

### **Continued Financial Progress Ahead**

For the third consecutive year, we will show a growing unreserved surplus in the General Fund – and in the Water, Sewer and Golf funds. And, for the third consecutive year, we will build our cumulative unreserved fund balance closer toward the level our auditors believe a city of our size and experience needs to achieve and maintain. Our hard work is being rewarded with steady increases in our unrestricted State Aid received from Albany. We have aggressively lobbied for our fair share, and the result has been a 127 percent increase in our State Aid in 5 years. From 2004, where Schenectady's aid level had stood at \$5.7 Million Dollars year after year, with no effort or leadership put forward to get more, we have raised our State revenue share to \$11.8 Million Dollars this year... and it is projected to rise to \$14 Million Dollars by 2010 – almost a 150 percent jump. At the same time, we have reversed the deadly spiral of huge property tax increases. Recovering from a staggering 26 percent tax hike in 2003, we stabilized property taxes, and we have actually provided modest TAX CUTS in the last two budgets.

### **Goal for 2009: Another Tax Cut**

I believe that continued conservative and responsible budgeting, while setting aside the reserves we need to meet our future expenses, will support setting as a goal the inclusion of another property tax cut for 2009 budget that I will present to you later this year.

### **A True Partnership: Working Together Works**

Schenectady's financial future is also being assured by an unprecedented level of new investment in our downtown. Working cooperatively with our partners at Metroplex, the County Legislature, our State leaders in Albany, our representatives in Washington – and with the full faith and confidence of the private sector, attracting more than \$250 Million Dollars in new investment for downtown. A thriving and exciting arts and entertainment district is rising around nearly \$30 Million Dollars in new improvements at Proctors, with new restaurants, a new hotel, movie cinema, specialty shops, cafes, retail and upscale housing. With each day, the sparkle and shine is returning to our downtown economic core, as people from across Schenectady County and throughout the Capital Region come to experience all we have to offer. The results of a recent Siena College poll show that more and 80 percent of Schenectady County residents surveyed said they have visited our

new downtown venues, like what they see, want to come back. What's more, they agree that this kind of investment brings important economic benefits to the County as a whole. In time, as these new projects unfold, buildings rise and new businesses open, and new jobs arrive, it will begin to enlarge our tax base – providing the kind of economic resurgence we need to channel to our city's needs – most importantly, the needs of our neighborhoods.

### **A New Erie Boulevard and New Opportunity at G.E.**

The year and the term before us promises to bring more excitement and challenge. We are moving forward with a 14 Million Dollar streetscape improvement for Erie Boulevard, the very corridor carved more than 175 years ago, the Erie Canal opened New York to the Western frontier, and fueled Schenectady's growth and prominence in the industrial age. Now, we will create a new gateway with the construction of the Erie-Edison Technology Corridor – providing for a new age of growth and opportunity in our city. A new streetscape of sidewalks, grassy boulevards, lighting and trees will enhance the walk ability and workability of this age-old corridor, while attracting new investments for Schenectady's role in our Tech Valley. At the base of Erie Boulevard, the lights of the GE monogram shines just a bit brighter lately, symbolic of a new era of growth and opportunity at the Schenectady-based operations of GE Power Generation. In October, we joined with Governor Spitzer, GE officials, and elected leaders from our community to announce the establishment of the Renewable Energy division in Schenectady, the company's planned investment of \$39 Million Dollars to transform Building 53, and the addition of 500 new, high-paying engineering jobs coming to our community. A new spirit of partnership with GE – that began in 2004 with the return of the GE-Schenectady monument to the front lawn of City Hall, is today bringing changes of monumental significance – 750 new jobs added at the Main Plant since 2007, a new division, and multi-million dollar investments by a company that began here more than a century ago.

### **A Cleaner, Greener Community**

Our economic recovery and resurgence has also brought priceless environmental benefits. Working with Siemens Energy, we have begun a series of energy-saving improvements for our aging city buildings, traffic signals, water and wastewater operations – enabling necessary investments in infrastructure that will provide long-term energy and capital equipment savings estimated at \$6.9 Million Dollars over the next 18 years. Siemens improvements made thus far are exceeding expectations – generating more than \$116,000.00 in energy savings for city taxpayers between 2006 and 2007. We are also making real progress in reducing Schenectady's carbon footprint by seven percent by the year 2012. Through our new \$1 Million Dollar Schenectady HOME Program and the construction of new, LEED-certified homes for income-eligible families, the cleaning up

of Brownfields for new, green development. Our successful and environmentally important maintenance agreement with Schenectady County is saving taxpayers up to \$1 Million Dollars each year, while providing a strong case for further consolidation and intergovernmental cooperation. Going forward, we must keep on track; our goal must be to explore new ideas and new opportunities to boost energy savings and ways to make our environment cleaner and greener.

### **Improved Public Safety with Public Trust**

With the return of the position of Public Safety Commissioner established last year, and now under the leadership of former State Police Superintendent Wayne Bennett, we are making significant progress in improving both management and discipline within the Police Department. Since 2005, New York's Operation IMPACT Program has helped to bring more than \$2 Million Dollars in anti-crime funding to Schenectady and the results are showing. According to the year-end statistics recently reported by the New York State Division of Criminal Justice Services, Schenectady showed the single largest percentage drop in both Violent Crime and Crimes on Property in 2007 out of the State's 17 designated Operation IMPACT communities. Working with District Attorney Bob Carney, Operation IMPACT is funding the expansion of our innovative network of crime surveillance 18 cameras throughout the city, with funding in place for 54 cameras.

### **Police Contract Reform**

Yet, despite the progress – real problems and real challenges remain. We must address the management and staffing issues caused by a Police Contract that impedes us from providing our citizens with the most effective and efficient level of protection possible. While we soon face the decision of an arbiter to settle wage issues on the 2006 and 2007 years of the contract, we will go back to the negotiating table to address the more daunting, costly and fundamental flaws in the labor-management agreement. Contractual provisions that now give virtually unlimited comp time and union leave must be corrected in order to provide for adequate police staffing without crippling overtime expenditures. And, the proven labor-management-public benefits of moving to a 12-hour shift for our police officers must be fully considered for implementation without undue demands or cost. And we must do more to earn the respect and trust of the public. We need the help of every citizen to open their eyes and hearts. To help us, their voices must be heard.

### **Stopping the Silence, Building the Public's Trust**

Working with the District Attorney's Office, Neighborhood Leaders and local Clergy, we will convene a "Stop the Silence Summit" this Spring, designed to generate an open dialogue of the importance of building a coalition between the public and the police – and

examining what factors prevent those who see and hear from telling police and others who can help – and how all voices can be heard to rid out streets of crime. We will reach out to experts in Washington, D.C., who have faced similar challenges and are making progress in their communities, and bring them here to share, listen and to learn. And, as I have already said, we must demand nothing less than excellence from those who are sworn to protect and to serve. With 20 new police officers hired in the past 9 months and 35 new officers added since 2004, the opportunity to change the culture has never been better. The message must go forth that every officer in this department will be held to the highest professional standards ... and that there can simply be no room for rogues, cowboys or thugs.

### **Toward the Future with Comprehensive Plan**

Yes, we have accomplished much and there is much to be proud of. Now, we must seize the opportunity of new challenges ahead for our city. We can begin with the framework and roadmap of a new Comprehensive Plan. The first such document produced in more than 37 years, the Comprehensive Plan lays out a framework for what the residents of Schenectady want for the future of their city as a whole, and individually for their own neighborhoods. Four guiding themes will serve as a roadmap as we work together to move Schenectady toward the year 2020 with the following goals:

- Quality city services efficiently delivered;
- Great homes in Safe and Stable Neighborhoods;
- A beautiful clean and green community; and
- Quality Workforce and Growing Businesses.

### **Restoring the Neighborhoods**

Restoring the viability and livability of our Neighborhoods must be our next priority. Each with its own individual plan – as part of our overall Comprehensive Plan – has the need for investments and improvements in streets, sidewalks, and infrastructure and in local neighborhood business corridors. We will not let 3 years of hard work simply gather dust on the bookshelf; rather we will include funding for the hiring of a Neighborhood Coordinator to ensure that each of our 10 new Neighborhood Plans become living documents and that they are actively pursued for implementation in the coming years. To further address neighborhood needs, I will ask Metroplex to consider an investment of at least \$5 Million Dollars to bring needed business-essential improvements in key neighborhood business corridors.

- Van Vranken Avenue;
- Crane Street;

- Albany Street;
- State Street (Veeder to Brandywine); and
- Broadway in Bellevue.

These neighborhood business corridors, once the center of our local neighborhood commerce activity, can thrive again ... as they benefit from newly paved streets, sidewalks and curbs, new street lighting and other improvements essential to attract new business growth. Extending the availability of our successful façade grant program to these neighborhood businesses – together with essential street improvements – can serve as a catalyst to attract additional investment while improving the appearance and livability of the area.

### **Fighting Neighborhood Blight with Increased Demolition**

In the coming year, Schenectady will also work vigorously to compete for its fair share of up to \$100 Million Dollars in new Housing and Urban Development federal funding proposed by Congressman Brian Higgins of Buffalo and Senator Hillary Clinton. Beginning next year under their co-sponsored Neighborhood Reclamation and Revitalization Program Act of 2007, \$100 Million Dollars would be available over 3 years to eligible and competitive communities for demolition of vacant, derelict and blighted housing, culling the density of blighted, shuttered or underutilized neighborhood buildings, opening up more green areas and increasing the value of remaining homes and improving the livability and safety of the neighborhoods as a whole. Still, we must do more.

### **Targeting the Worst First**

Tonight, I am proposing a 50-First Program, to immediately target funding for the demolition of the 50 worst vacant and derelict properties in Schenectady. I will begin by establishing a reserve from our 2007 audit, and propose additional demolition funding in my 2009 Budget to launch this effort. Although the properties in need of demolition today could well number in the hundreds, we must commit to begin first by targeting the worst of the worst. Through this program, and consistent with our new Comprehensive Plan, we should also explore ways to reduce the overabundance of two-family housing by providing incentives for the conversion of good-quality, code-compliant two-family homes to owner-occupied single-family homes. Your support of the 50-First Program will be a giant first step toward our goal of improving the quality of life for our residents. Together, we have accomplished so much, and together we can accomplish even more. Schenectady is a great city, a truly American community and a great place to live. We have only to look back at the remarkable progress we have made by working together – progress from what many thought were insurmountable odds; to have the faith, the courage and conviction for a new vision for Schenectady. Thank you.



**General –**

The Bellevue Preservation Association meeting will be on Thursday, March 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 P.M. at St. Paul's Episcopal Church. The guest speaker will be Ray Gillen. He will discuss the Golub Project; Clinton Square and the DSS Building. There will also be a discussion about new possibilities for the future of the organization.

From American Legion Post 1005 and Veterans of WW II-Korea at Viet Nam Wars, letters thanking the City Council for recent rental monies.

**PETITIONS:**

With 10 signatures requesting the Sign Ordinance be revised.

With 35 signatures requesting the maintenance facility on Oregon Ave. be cleaned up, but, that it remain parkland.

**COMMITTEE REPORTS:**

Mr. Blanchfield stated that the Finance Committee met; he explained Agenda Item #8 and that the award went to Grandview Concrete for \$90,340.00.

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR (LEGISLATIVE ITEMS):**

Ms. King invited all who wished to address the City Council on any item of the Legislative Agenda to come forward. The following speaker rose to be heard and his remarks are summarized:

Robert Sanders, 2821 Halsey Drive, stated that he is in support of Agenda Item #3, designating 103 Kings Road as a historic site.

Seeing no other speakers to come before the City Council, Ms. King declared the Privilege of the Floor on the Legislative Agenda closed.

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

**Consent Agenda –**

Local Law #2-2008

Adopted Unanimously

Resolution No. 2008-36

Adopted Unanimously

**Consent Agenda (Continued) –**

Resolution No. 2008-37	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-38	Adopted Unanimously
Resolution No. 2008-CS18	Adopted Unanimously

**PRIVILEGE OF THE FLOOR:**

Ms. King 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:

Rev. Steven Clunn, 603 State Street, spoke in regard to the comments from SICM last month regarding the Police Department. SICM asked for true community policing, putting more officers on the streets; we can afford this by consolidation. The County can take over the lockup. Finally, I advocate for a more transparent Police Review Board process including the full support of an independent investigator.

Harry Brand, 2108 Van Rensselaer Drive, said – I was impressed with the “State of the City Address” of the City of Schenectady. I think that all the departments need to be reviewed to see how we operate. Also lights – there are lights out all over the city. I have been trying for 3 ½ months to get a light bulb replaced. Also, the Bureau of Service and Erie Blvd. – who’s going to follow these contracts?

Jim Livingston, Union Triangle Neighborhood, said – My family has occupied this house for 80 years and have maintained it to the best of our ability and we have never missed a tax payment. Two weeks ago, I bitterly complained about certain city officials not engaging in code enforcement. I particularly complained that the Corporation Counsel refused to meet with me to discuss the Grouper Law in our neighborhood. He offers a different account; I stand by my account. He refused to meet with me. Several people observed that. Subsequent to that, he agreed to meet with me – I did receive a letter. “Four days after I came here, I received a violation on my house”. I agree that there are some problems on my house. Not a single other house in my neighborhood was cited. I am here to suggest that there is some sort of retaliatory attitude here in the city. It’s outrageous – I won’t be silenced. I am not embarrassed, but, there is something seriously wrong. We need to do something about the professionalism of people in the city. Once the Zoning Officer said, “Your house is not in such good

condition”. I objected and he apologized. I have worked for many years to see that laws are obeyed in my neighborhood. Mr. Forkey’s house was in disrepair – we complained and now, the house has been repaired. For 2 years, no one could follow up on code enforcement, but, 4 days after, I appear here; I receive a violation. I guess someone wanted me to see that there was code enforcement in the city. I encourage everyone not to be intimidated, but, to come down here and speak and recognize “arrogant city officials” need to be publicly comforted. The neighbors need to stick together and see that code enforcement is done correctly. Lastly, I was cited for not having 4” numbers on my house. I addressed that, but, several other houses have several violations including that and no one else was cited.

Mary McClaine, Schenectady resident, stated that over the past months, I have encouraged the Council to appoint people who live in Schenectady to the DSIC Board. It never occurred to me that people were being appointed who did not work downtown. That’s worse. If this was a union issue, it wouldn’t fly. Ms. Walzuna’s appointment to DSIC was a mistake. How can she be part of Schenectady’s downtown if she works in Saratoga? Can she observe the daily dynamics of the downtown district? The 3 “yes” votes for the appointment – just goes to show what happens when some of the Councilmembers sit in a classroom rather than to use the time to feel the pulse of their constituents. Inexperience or indifference doesn’t help. We are fortunate to have a small group of business owners who want to participate in the daily life of the city. They deserve a place at the table.

Andrea Haines, NY Civil Liberties Union, said – I support the recommendations made to you by the Committee on Social Justice suggesting improvements to our Police Department. We suggest to Commissioner Bennett that he implement the suggestions made by the Justice Department and the Grand Jury.

Eunice Chouffi, 147 Annabelle Place, stated that 4 weeks ago, the Schenectady Committee for Social Justice recommended to the City Council suggestions for improving our Police Department. These recommendations are a follow-up to the Grand Jury investigation. I am a member of this committee and I strongly urge you to consider all of these recommendations. The Council may need to appoint a task force to examine each of these suggestions if our 3 member Public Safety Committee cannot do it. Please do it soon. I will comment on the following:

**A and A1 – Retain a Public Safety Commissioner**

The amount of serious problems that this city faces are overwhelming for a Police Chief. It is imperative that we should have a full time Public Safety Commissioner as well as a full time Police Chief. An amendment to the City Charter should be enacted so that the administration cannot make that decision on its own – to have a Public Safety Commissioner or not to have one.

**E – Certification or Accreditation**

The Department of Justice investigation showed that the policies and procedures of the Police Department need major work. This has been an extremely slow progress. Commissioner Bennett has assigned personnel to work on this. The Council should receive a monthly update on these changes so that we see progress. It is not enough when asked – 6 months or 1 year later – “How are these changes coming along”? To receive the answer – “We are steadily working on them”. If 1 policy or procedure a month could be “tweaked”, we might possibly reach the goal for accreditation – some day. The Public Safety Chairperson could report to the Council and the public each month as to how many policies and procedures have been written or rewritten that month – and how many to go.

**C-3 Support the recommendation for a Recruiter**

Mayor Stratton put this forward during 2007. Focus is needed for Public Safety recruitment. The recruiter would develop a plan for adding diversity that could be seen each year. This recruiter would have to work with the joint City and County’s Affirmative Action Office. Surely, our Police and Fire Departments are sorely lacking in diversity even though a few attempts have been instituted. I recently moved to Rotterdam after living in the city for 45 years. I am a part of the city and the city is an integral part of me and always will be.

Rev. Michael J. Hogan, 801 Stanley Street, spoke in regard to consolidation. It has been “toyed” with where the city could contract with the county for coverage because of the times - it might be time to do this. We could save money, recreate a new contract and we wouldn’t have to go through many of the things that we are going through now. The idea is not totally out of line, but, I’m not sure that its day has come, but, I would like to keep that in front of you.

Rev. Phillip Grigsby, stated that we gave 23 specific recommendations to the Council as a result of the Grand Jury’s report recommendations. We would like

you to look at how soon – true community policing can be put in place. We also agree that there are several things that can be done to improve the Police Review Board. We also urge the support of a Public Safety Commissioner.

Helga A. Schroeter, 1436 Lowell Road, said – I am a long-time member of the League of Women Voters and currently hold the position of Judicial Chair in the local League. In this capacity, I also represent the League on the Schenectady Committee for Social Justice. I am here tonight to urge your continued strong support of Public Safety Commissioner Bennett, along with your ongoing commitment to the position of a Public Safety Commissioner. The city is very fortunate in having Mr. Bennett's strong leadership skills, as he addresses the ongoing issues facing the Police Department. He needs your clear and full support in his endeavors. The League has taken very clear positions in the area of oversight, record-keeping and openness of all governmental units at national, state and local levels. It has been a strong supporter of the Police Civilian Review Board. As you know, the local League has a representative on the Review Board! We urge you to strengthen the board's effectiveness by speeding up the review process from the time complaints are received to the final findings of the board and by assuring that the results are publicized. The board's investigator also needs your full support. Finally, in order to foster greater trust and public confidence in the work of the Police Department, it is of utmost importance to invest in recruiting new officers who more closely resemble the ethnic and racial make-up of the city's population. Therefore, we urge you to be as creative and pro-active as possible to obtain that goal which is strongly supported by Commissioner Bennett. Thank you very much for allowing me to share the League's concerns with you tonight!

Carlos Caraballo, Schenectady resident, said – With the city's approval, we may have an Hispanic Cultural Affairs Office.

Louis H. Buhrmaster, Vice President of the Schenectady Industrial Corporation, 301 Nott Street, sent his remarks in for the record. It is as follows:

The Schenectady Industrial Corporation (SIC) is and has been assessed for \$7,500,000.00. Based on that figure, taxes were paid for many years through 2005. This was during the 10-year period that General Electric Company was shutting down their operations at SIC. In May of 2006, a certiorari action against the city was initiated by SIC to reduce the assessment from \$7,500,000.00 to \$750,000.00. To date, the city has not hired an appraiser. In the meantime, the city has sold the 2006 taxes to American Tax and interest is being added to the taxes billed at 24% per year. For 2005 – the tax bill, including water and sewer fees, exceeded \$500,000.00 while the gross income was approximately

\$400,000.00. Since then, the gross income has increased to \$600,000.00 with environmental expenses running between \$200,000.00 and \$300,000.00 per year, in addition to normal operating expenses. We are still losing money. Last year along, we spent \$130,000.00 to remove a DEC Consent Order against SIC. Now, we are eligible for the Brownfield fund. After the City refused to allow Crumb Rubber to locate at our site, the Mayor stated that they had other plans for our property – a surprise to say the least. Crumb Rubber went to Colonie and has established a very successful business with an international market. Since then, Metroplex has brought to SIC two potential purchasers. First was Harmony Mills. We negotiated a contract with them that would keep all of the existing businesses on site while making a substantial investment in improving the facilities. Metroplex became dissatisfied with Harmony Mills and brought in a number of other developers. None submitted plans or offers to purchase nor did Metroplex fulfill their verbal commitment to find SIC tenants to replace the Crumb Rubber income while our certiorari action moved to trial. Finally, Preferred Realty was introduced to SIC and was shown the plant. Again, at a considerable expense to SIC, a contract was negotiated along with a due diligence document that Preferred requested. During this process, SIC told Metroplex that prospects must be told of existing purchase options and lease terms that must be resolved before proceeding. Also, the issue of the RPI reactor must be discussed and what can be done to remove it from the site. To date, none of these issues raised by SIC have been resolved. Preferred, without contacting SIC, prepared a site plan showing all of our buildings demolished with a statement that the site would be ready for construction by January, 2008. A brochure was sent to many developers and realtors in the Northeast. In a short amount of time, all of our tenants found out about Preferred's plan and some started looking for new locations. One tenant left. In August, 2007 - after not hearing from Preferred Realty, we asked for our due diligence information back and it was returned without comment. Nothing more has been heard from them. They obviously have no interest in the SIC site. In December, 2007 – Metroplex informed SIC that Metroplex was proceeding with Eminent Domain. SIC and Metroplex have not been able to agree on environmental indemnification for the SIC and the proceeding appears to be stalled. Then in late January, 2008 – notice was given by the City to SIC that a new Zoning Law was to be submitted to the Council to change our zoning from M-2 to C-3. SIC and some of their tenants have written the law to the City and no opportunity has been offered to us to state our concerns in person to the Zoning Board. As I have stated before, I am totally opposed to government taking private property and turning it over to private developers for private use. Eighteen states have passed laws to prevent this practice. As of today, there is no developer, no acceptable site plan, and no new location for the 21 businesses and over 300 employees that occupy 65% of our space. Our largest tenants

require buildings with 50' of headroom and cranes that can lift up to 40 tons. No other location in the Capital District can provide this. Waterfront development sounds great, but come and see our site from November to April with the high water, cold weather, snow and ice. You will not be able to walk or ride on 900 ft. of waterfront owned or controlled by RPI. Above all, we invite the City Council and Zoning Board to tour our site to see what we have done, are doing, and what the future can be without changing our zoning classification. It is our request to you to delay changing the zoning on the "Alco Site" from M-2 to C-3 until the property has been acquired for development in accordance with C-3.

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

#### **MISCELLANEOUS:**

Mr. Allen stated that one concern that I have is that I heard that Tracy Chance is leaving and going to Albany. If this is true, I would like a report on what she has done and what progress has been made in areas of diversity and also handicap accessibility. Who's replacing her? I don't know what's going on in that office because she's not allowed to report to us. We gave the County \$50,000.00 for this service. Also regarding the street lights, I have a hard time with this. I think we need to put this on the Public Service & Utilities Committee. We pay for these lights. Also, I'm concerned about Mr. Livingston's comments. We shouldn't use our departments to "hammer" people when they bring their concerns here. I don't know if its true, but, the coincidence is such that I question it. A lot of houses have violations that need to be addressed.

Ms. Blanchard said – I have long supported the Privilege of the Floor and I am concerned about what happened to Jim Livingston. He is my neighbor. We have many code violations in Union Triangle and many absentee landlords. We would welcome a crackdown on these violations. What happened last week was not a crackdown, in fact, it "smacks" of misuse of authority. I hope, Mr. Mayor, you would look into this. Also, we went to Troy's Farmer's Market which is year around. I am working with a group to have a year round Farmer's Market here. Lastly, this Friday is Art Night and you can get the schedule on the web – [www.artnightschenectady.com](http://www.artnightschenectady.com).

Mr. McCarthy thanked all the Clergy for their comments tonight. When things seem to be moving slow, it's not that we have forgotten – we are working on an on-going basis. Commissioner Bennett is doing things daily. It's a slow and methodical process. We will have some things on Monday in Committee. This will probably be a 6 or 9 month process as we move through things. I am still

going to look for segments and input from the community. We all know that there is a problem – we want it to be different and our end goal is going to be something that we can be proud of and the delivery service will be something that we are leaders in, as opposed to being the “butt” of jokes – that we restore this community to what potential it is. Also, Wednesday night is the Police Review Board Meeting at 6:00 P.M. in Room 110.

Mr. Blanchfield commended the Mayor on the “State of the City Address”. I am particularly encouraged by the “50 First Initiative” which is a step in the right direction. Focusing on the 50 worst properties is a great first step. Also, thanks to the Business and Professional Women for coming tonight and Malinda Myers is one of our primary citizens in the city. Many thanks to her for her many efforts.

The Mayor said – Thanks to the members of the Committee on Social Justice, Rev. Steven Clunn, Rev. Michael Hogan and Rev. Phillip Grigsby. As Councilman McCarthy pointed out, a work schedule is in progress. We have taken stock in what our problems are – we know what they are and they are resolved in our commitment to address each and everyone. Also, I have not heard anything regarding Tracy Chance, but I will look into it. We should have a report whether she is leaving or not. In regard to street lights, that’s a continued issue. Some street lights are owned by the city, but, the majority of them are National Grid’s property. National Grid also has a website where you can report these. Also perhaps, our Public Safety and the police – when they are out at night – can report some of these outages. Lastly, I will look into the citation that Mr. Livingston received.

Ms. King thanked Mr. Allen for Chairing the meeting 2 weeks ago when I had an unexpected trip to New Jersey. Also regarding the potholes, Carl Olsen has assured me that he has crews out daily. This time of the year, cold patch is used and it doesn’t last long. Complaints can be called into 382-5120.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Seeing no further business to come before the City Council, Ms. King declared the meeting adjourned at 9:15 P.M.

**A TRUE RECORD**

**BY CAROLYN FRIELLO  
CITY CLERK**