



The City Council Chronicle



2017 Issue 1



Seated

Michael A. Patterson, Northeast | Molly Clifford Northwest
Elaine M. Spaul, East | Adam C. McFadden, South

Standing

Matt Haag, At-Large | Jacklyn Ortiz, At-Large
Loretta C. Scott, President, At-Large;

From the President's pen: *A note from Loretta Scott*

We are a Sanctuary City!

As a city and as a nation we are still processing the results of this November's election. For many of us it was very personal and very contentious, and we are left to figure out what is next. I know that feelings of fear have been expressed by many in our community, that people worry about their safety and the safety of their friends, family and neighbors. It is my commitment, that within the borders of our City, we will do all that is possible to protect the dignity and human rights of every single person.

Nationally and locally we have seen an increase in the number of bias and hate related crimes since Election Day. This is a travesty and we must stand firmly against such hate. Our City, our community, will be a beacon of acceptance for all. That is why I joined my colleagues on City Council and the Mayor in declaring Rochester a Sanctuary City. This is not the first time Rochester has taken this stand, in 1986, the City Council passed a Resolution declaring Rochester as a "City of Sanctuaries."

In 1986 Rochester declared its support of citizens in their efforts to maintain and further human rights for residents and for all who come within our borders. This February, in response to changes in federal immigration enforcement practices and priorities, we expand on this decades old resolution. We joined almost 300 municipalities across the country in becoming a Sanctuary City, and we commit to the following:

- Our Police Department shall not engage in activities solely for the purpose of enforcing Federal Immigration laws.
- City personnel will not inquire about the citizenship or immigration status of persons they come in contact with unless that inquiry is required by law or as a condition of receiving benefits or if it is needed for a criminal investigation.
- City personnel should limit the collection of immigration related information and ensure non-discriminatory access to benefits and services.
- City resources shall not be used to create a Federal registry based on religion, ethnicity, national origin, race, gender, gender identity or sexual orientation.



providing Rochester citizens with the tools they need to be successful in finding quality jobs that pay a living wage. If you have any question about the Civil Service hiring process reach

We have done this with the guidance and support of the New York State Attorney General's Office, and in full compliance with all federal and state laws. While the times ahead may be uncertain we on City Council are committed to providing safety and stability within our borders.

Councilmember Haag: Dog Park Pilot to Come to Cobbs Hill

Councilmember Matt Haag is excited to announce that the City of Rochester will be opening its first dog park. The park will have a pilot period of six months and will be located on approximately three-quarters of an acre at the Northeast portion of Cobbs

Hill Park. The dog park has been approved and the goal is have it up and running this spring. The pilot program will open the dog park to all Rochester residents with a licensed dog. Initially there will be no charge to bring your dog as the City

DES Staff and I took this request and spent time hosting community meetings around the City, until we felt we had selected the right location and had community support. I'm glad we will see all of this hard work come to fruition this spring."

evaluates the program, once established a nominal annual fee will be assessed to any residents looking to use the park. "We are really excited to bring a dog park to the City," said Councilmember Haag, "this was really as much citizen driven as it was my personal effort. I've heard from so many residents who wanted to have this amenity in our City. The



Vice President Miller Welcomes New Funding for Rochester Land Bank



The City of Rochester has been awarded its total request of \$1.5M from the Community Revitalization Initiative, a grant from the Office of the NYS Attorney General. The City of Rochester has used the Land Bank as a tool to invest in neighborhood stabilization by engaging in strategic blight removal, supporting home ownership opportunities, and creating quality rental housing for low-income members of our community. With the last round of grant funding the Land Bank was able to rehabilitate 86 vacant and blighted properties of which 73 have been sold to first time homebuyers and 35 additional properties were demolished. "The Land Bank has been an amazing asset for the City," said Rochester City

Council Vice President Dana Miller, who also sits on the Board of Directors for the Rochester Land Bank. "We have been able to use the Land Bank strategically to benefit neighborhoods by taking down derelict and unsafe structures and also by increasing owner occupancy rates. We are also using the Land Bank in innovative new ways forming public-private partnerships that are helping remediate contaminated land all while allowing businesses to expand in our City," Miller went on to say. The Rochester Land Bank was formed in 2013 with Council support and State approval.

Councilmember Spaull Honors Neighborhood Leader

A group of neighbors in the Park Avenue Neighborhood are joining with the Park Avenue Festival Committee, developers, and Councilmember Spaull to come together to remember an icon in their neighborhood. The group has joined forces to work on a project to improve the park on Barrington Street, in memory of community leader Jimmy Catalano. "We all lost a wonderful neighborhood champion last year with the passing of Jimmy Catalano. Jimmy was known to many as the Mayor of Park Avenue; he is a person who was responsible for making Park Avenue become the lively place it is today," said East District Councilmember Elaine Spaull. This park will be a multi-faceted project that will involve new landscaping and a memorial tree; the neighborhood has agreed to maintain the park. "I was so excited to be involved with everyone who is working so hard on this project," Spaull went on to say, "we need to honor and celebrate our City neighborhoods and those who invest their, time, talent, and energy making them a better place for all to live, work, and visit."



Increasing Rochester's Visitability a Priority for Clifford

Visitability isn't a word that everyone knows, however, for many Rochester residents or visitors living with some form of physical limitation it makes all the difference. So, what is *visitability* exactly? It is a measure of a place's ease of access for people with disabilities. A home or business that is visitable takes into account the width of passageways to accommodate wheelchairs or other mobility devices, the height of light switches and outlets, and accessibility and size of bathrooms. Councilmember Molly



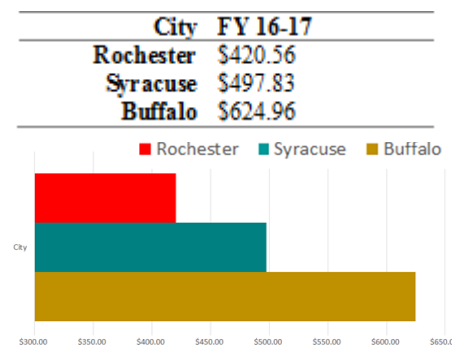
Clifford has been working with the Center for Disability Rights (CDR) in an effort to create local legislation that would ensure that the construction of a new single-family, duplex, or row house that includes residential space on the first floor incorporates visitability standards. Clifford intends to introduce legislation that would set new standards in the City of Rochester. "To me this is common sense, all new builds in our City should look to incorporate design features that allow for all people to use them comfortably and safely," said Councilmember Clifford, "I'm incredibly thankful for the support and recommendations I have received from the people at CDR, and I hope we can work together to pass this legislation." If this legislation is passed, it will need to be brought before the State Building Code Council for approval.

Councilmember Conklin Calls on Albany for Equity in State Aid



Carolee Conklin serves as chair of the Finance Committee for the Rochester City Council, and as part of this role she reviews and monitors the City's Budget and expenditures. A

longstanding concern held by Councilmember Conklin is the discrepancy in state aid that the City of Rochester receives compared to other Upstate cities. "Even with budget shortfalls Rochester has remained fiscally responsible, and we have for decades; Rochester boasts excellent marks from all major credit rating agencies, the highest in our area," said Councilmember Conklin, "We weathered the Great Recession because we know how to stretch a dollar and we know how to make sacrifices, just like the



families in our city do every day. For years we have been asking for justice in state aid, but we haven't been heard. Rochesterians have been asked by the state to tighten their belts a little tighter than residents of other municipalities, and the proof is in the numbers." Rochester receives around \$200 less than Buffalo and \$75 less than Syracuse per capita. In an effort to call attention to this, and secure additional funding Councilmember Conklin and President Scott have sent a joint letter to the Governor and our State Delegation.

Councilmember Ortiz Works to Increase Access to Housing Repair Programs

The City of Rochester offers several opportunities for assistance to home owners in our community regarding housing repair. Services have a wide range and include Lead Hazard Control, Emergency Assistance Repair, Window Replacement, Roofing, and targeted housing repair in specific neighborhoods. "There are so many sources of funding, but they were never available in one place, nor were they easy to find online," said Councilmember Jackie Ortiz who chairs the Neighborhood and Community Development Committee, "I've made it my mission to insure that our residents know about and have access to these grants." Councilmember Ortiz has worked with the staff in the Department of Neighborhood & Business Development to consolidate the rehab and repair programs into one list of opportunities. The list is updated regularly providing new information on when grants are available, when to apply, and how to know if you are eligible. There is also

important information to connect information that can connect individuals to people who can help them apply at PathStone and Action for a Better Community. If you'd like to learn more about the grant and loan opportunities available for homeowners in the City go to: <http://www.cityofrochester.gov/homerepairgrants/> "We are continuing to try to find ways to make city government more available to residents by getting information out in most the accessible ways, and we rely on citizens to provide us with crucial feedback" said Councilmember Ortiz.



McFadden: Let's Work to End Housing Discrimination

Almost a year ago Councilmember Adam McFadden and Mayor Warren jointly submitted Int. No. 2016-300: The Prohibition of Housing Discrimination Based on Source of Income, to the Council for consideration. This legislation would prohibit landlords and property managers from discriminating against an individual on the basis of his or her income source by refusing to show, sell, or rent housing. In addition, it would prohibit any advertisement or publication that contains exclusionary language based on potential source of income. The legislation does not prohibit discrimination based on the *amount* of income, a landlord still may refuse to lease to an applicant whose income is insufficient to meet the rent. "I want to be clear, because there is a lot of misinformation circulating about this legislation, in no way does the legislation



mandate that people receiving assistance are guaranteed a specific rental. This legislation is about access; it's about giving people a chance. The way our current system is set up, people who are receiving income assistance for housing can be denied or refused before they apply for an apartment," said Councilmember McFadden. "This legislation expands protections for some of our most vulnerable populations including those using Housing Choice Vouchers, Social Security, Supplemental Security Income, unemployment insurance, or veteran's

benefits," McFadden went on to say. Councilmember McFadden believes it is essential for Rochester to enact this policy as there are no Federal or New York State statutes prohibiting source of income discrimination, with the exception of limited Federal laws that prohibit source of income discrimination for recipients of certain housing subsidies. Although New York State does not have a Source of Income statute, many states do, as do several municipalities in New York State including: the City of Buffalo, Town of Hamburg, Nassau County, New York City, and the Town of West Seneca. "This is not the only solution to our housing needs, we must continue to work to improve the programs and services that fund housing for these populations and engage our landlords in the process as well," McFadden concluded.

Councilmember Patterson Talks KIVA Loans



Councilmember Mike Patterson is reaching out to business owners in the Northeast to let them know about Kiva Rochester, a partnership between the City of Rochester and Kiva, the world's

largest crowdfunded micro lender. Since August of 2016, Kiva Rochester has worked to provide Rochester small business owners and entrepreneurs with zero percent interest loans of \$10,000 or less to help grow or launch their business. "The Kiva program is an amazing opportunity for new businesses



or for businesses looking to expand; zero interest loans are almost unheard of," said Councilmember Mike Patterson, "The City has built an infrastructure to help people understand the process and work with them to apply for a loan." For more information about eligibility go to: www.cityofrochester.gov/kiva. You can also learn more about how to help those in the community through being a Kiva Trustee.

Upcoming Council Meetings

April 2017

Su	Mo	Tue	We	Th	Fri	Sa
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May 2017

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June 2017

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25	26	27	28	29	30	

Do you want to:

Speak to Council

To sign up call:

(585) 428-7421

Speakers start at:

6:30 PM

Speak to Council is held immediately prior to Council Meetings and to speak you must sign up by 5:30 PM on the meeting day.

Committee Meeting/Public Hearing Council Meeting