



ANNUAL REPORT 2015

BROOME COUNTY LAND BANK CORPORATION

60 Hawley Street, 5th Floor
Binghamton, NY 13901

Margaret J. Scarinzi, Executive Director

MScarinzi@co.broome.ny.us

Ph: 607-778-6001

www.broomelandbank.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND OFFICERS

Names and Titles

Aaron Martin <i>Chairman</i>	Chris Papastrat <i>Vice Chairman</i>
Elaine Miller <i>Secretary</i>	Jason Garnar <i>Treasurer</i>
Stacey Duncan <i>Director</i>	Dave Hamlin <i>Director</i>
Erik Miller <i>Director</i>	

2015 BOARD COMMITTEES AND MEMBERSHIP

Governance/Personnel Committee

Elaine Miller, Chair
Erik Miller
Chris Papastrat

Finance/Audit Committee

Jason Garnar, Chair
Dave Hamlin
Elaine Miller

2015 COMMUNITY ADVISORY PANEL

Lois Andrascik	Rosemary Markoff
Emil Bielecki	Janet McHenry
Joel Boyd	Joseph Moody
Brendan O'Bryan	Robert Murphy
Christopher Dziedzic	Nick Pappas
Timothy Huften	Michael Sopchak
Kenneth Kamlet, Esq.	Mary Webster
Eileen Konecny	Jerry Willard

CORPORATION STAFF

Margaret J. Scarinzi
Executive Director

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Broome County Land Bank is to foster economic and community development by acquiring, holding, managing, developing and marketing distressed, vacant, abandoned and under-utilized properties.

2015 Overview

The Broome County Land Bank Corporation (BCLBC), a nonprofit corporation, was created by Broome County in 2013 under the New York Land Bank Act. The BCLBC was created to target distressed, vacant, abandoned and foreclosed properties with the goal of fostering community and economic development by eliminating blight and stabilizing neighborhoods. The intention is to put nuisance properties back into productive use.

This was the BCLBC's third year of operation and it was filled with activity. In 2015, the BCLBC acquired several properties for demolition, developed a strategic plan, hired a new Executive Director, embarked on its first housing rehabilitations, made positive progress on a multi-million dollar mixed-use market rate housing project and became a member of the New York State Land Bank Association. This report will highlight the many notable accomplishments achieved by the BCLBC in 2015.

2015 Highlights

The following are summaries of the activities and accomplishments of the BCLBC over the past year.

50 Front Street Redevelopment Project

Estimated Total Project Cost: \$21 Million

The BCLBC acquired 50 Front Street from Broome County in March 2014. Through an RFP process, Newman Development Group (NDG) was selected by the BCLBC Board in May 2014 as the preferred developer for this site. The project will include demolition of the current building and construction of a mixed-use commercial space and market-rate housing complex. The estimated total project cost is \$21million. In late 2015, the Board authorized the Executive Director to execute a sales contract with NDG for the sale of 50 Front Street for a price of \$500,000. The Board also approved transferring \$3 million in Empire State Development grant funds, originally



50 Front Street, City of Binghamton

awarded to the BCLBC for this project, to NDG to assist with the remediation and demolition of the property. NDG is currently in a period of due diligence. The expected timeframe for this project is 26 months.

NYS Office of the Attorney General

Community Revitalization Initiative, Round 2 Grant Award: \$805,401

The BCLBC was awarded \$805,401 through round 2 of the NYS Office of the Attorney General's (OAG) Community Revitalization Initiative (CRI). The source of funding for this grant program was settlement monies from various financial institutions due to their improper practices contributing to the foreclosure crisis. The purpose of this grant program is to continue the NYS OAG's efforts to address threats to homeownership and community stabilization precipitated by the mortgage crisis. The term of the grant is January 1, 2015 thru December 31, 2016. Below are projects funded by this program.

435 State Street, Binghamton (Former Big Lots)

With the OAG funds, the BCLBC developed a project which focused on the north side of the City of Binghamton. The plan initially included the redevelopment of the former Big Lots site at 435 State Street and the demolition of seven residential properties. In early 2015, Delta EAS was hired to do structural and environmental analysis on the 435 State Street property. Upon completion, the reports showed that the building was structurally unsound. Following that determination, the City purchased the property from Broome County and indicated they would no longer need funding from the BCLBC for the project, thus ending the BCLBC's involvement with the property.

Residential Demolitions

The BCLBC acquired seven properties on the City of Binghamton's north side for the purpose of demolition. The properties were acquired from Broome County, and the addresses are:

75 Liberty Street	15 Munsell Street
102 Liberty Street	34 Munsell Street
113 Liberty Street	20 Pearne Street
128 Liberty Street	

Through an RFP process, the BCLBC Board selected Delta EAS to perform the structural and environmental analysis of each property, as well as to draft design documents for demolition. By the end of 2015, Delta EAS completed all fieldwork and reports relating to the structural and environmental assessments of the properties and started work on the design documents. In early 2016, it is anticipated a demolition contractor will be selected and demolitions will begin, with all work completed by the end of the 2nd quarter.

In an effort to bring some cheer to the neighborhood, and in anticipation of the demolitions, the BCLCB entered into an agreement to allow the Department of Public Art to hang murals on a few of its properties. They were installed on 15 Munsell, 113 and 128 Liberty Street.



47 North Street, Binghamton

47 North Street is another property that the BCLBC acquired from Broome County. It is a property that



47 North Street, City of Binghamton

members of the Safe Streets Coalition expressed an interest in redeveloping. After having title for a year, and receiving no substantive plan for redevelopment from members of the Safe Streets Coalition, the BCLBC decided to include it in its residential demolition program. Part of the process requires an historic review of the property. Since it is located within the City of Binghamton, the property was subject to review by CAUD, the City's Commission on Architecture and Urban Design. CAUD made the determination that it was historically significant, being one of only a few remaining examples of the Second Empire style. Not having capacity to redevelop the property according to CAUD standards, the BCLBC issued an RFP for the purchase and redevelopment of 47 North Street. The RFP was issued in November and the deadline for

submission passed without any proposals received. A second RFP was issued in early 2016; its deadline is March 31, 2016.

NYS Community Development Block Grant

Community Renewal Funding - \$750,000

In late 2014, Broome County was awarded \$750,000 in NYS Community Development Block Grant Funds – Community Renewal Funding for blight removal and housing rehabilitation. With the funds, the BC Home Ownership and Housing Initiative was established with the goal of removing blight by rehabilitating foreclosed, vacant homes and creating affordable housing for persons of low to moderate income.

In 2015, Broome County entered into an administrative services agreement with the BCLBC for the administration of the program. The BCLBC identified its first two properties for rehabilitation, 1857 Burdick Road in the Town of Binghamton, and 117 Lagrange Street in the Town of Vestal. Both properties were foreclosed on by the County.

With properties identified, the BCLBC initiated the steps towards rehabilitating the properties. Through competitive bid, Jennings Environmental Management was selected to perform asbestos surveys on the properties and to develop a work plan for remediation of both asbestos and lead. The Broome County Health Department conducted the lead testing on both properties. Jennings completed the asbestos surveys by year's end and delivered full asbestos reports in early January. Pending the lead testing results from the Health Department, the next steps will be for Jennings to develop a work plan and, once complete, the BCLBC will issue an RFP for a construction manager to oversee the completion of the rehabilitation projects.

Strategic Plan

In an effort to develop a focused and detailed action plan that would help achieve its mission, the BCLBC undertook the process of creating a strategic plan in 2015. Through a competitive process, the BCLBC hired a consultant, Susan Payne, to assist with the process of developing the strategic plan. The consultant conducted interviews with Board members, Community Advisory Panel members, held several strategic planning sessions and reviewed best practices of other land banks across the State. The plan was completed and adopted by the Board in July, and can be found on the Land Bank's website, www.broomelandbank.org. In 2016, the staff and Board of the BCLBC will continue to implement recommendations included in the adopted strategic plan.

New York Land Bank Association, Inc.

In fall 2015, Articles of Incorporation were filed and the New York Land Bank Association, Inc. was created. The first official meeting of the Association took place on November 12, 2015. The BCLBC Executive Director is a Director on the Association's Board and is a member of its Professional Development and Outreach Committee. The Association was created to promote and market the use of land banks, provide information on the establishment and operation of land banks, provide support and technical assistance among land banks across New York State and to provide and support governmental relations in advancement of land banks within New York State. The Association currently has nine members and holds monthly meetings on the fourth Thursday of each month, with an annual meeting in the fall of each year.

Project Application

In order to fairly and consistently review projects that come before the BCLBC, a project application was created by the Executive Director and adopted by the Board in July. Prior to July, the Land Bank lacked a tool where potential projects could be evaluated consistently on the same terms as others. The application provides a platform where projects will be considered based on critical information such as total project cost, plan for the property, funding sources/development partners and how the project fits the mission of the Land Bank. The application can be downloaded at www.broomelandbank.org.

Looking Ahead

NY Main Street Program

Village of Windsor Downtown Revitalization - \$220,116

In July 2015, on behalf of the Village of Windsor, the BCLBC submitted a Consolidated Funding Application for funding through the NY Main Street Program for the revitalization of the Village of Windsor's historic downtown business district. In late December the State announced the application received \$220,116 in funding. The BCLBC will administer the grant for the Village. It is expected that several properties will undertake rehabilitation projects, including façade, exterior and interior renovations, replacement of doors and windows and energy efficiency upgrades, resulting in a revitalized commercial/residential district that will provide new amenities to residents and business owners, as well as stimulate new economic activity in historic downtown Windsor.

NYS Office of the Attorney General

CRI, Round 2: Additional Projects

As mentioned earlier in this report, the BCLBC is no longer involved with the redevelopment of 435 State Street, Binghamton. As a result, there are NYS OAG funds originally earmarked for that project which the BCLBC is currently seeking approval from the NYS OAG to apply to other demolition projects within Broome County. Here are summaries of those projects:

1605 Davis Avenue, Endwell

The BCLBC is seeking to partner with the Town of Union and Broome County for the demolition of two vacant, blighted buildings located at 1605 Davis Avenue, Endwell. Once gone, this will provide the opportunity to build a community garden and help revitalize this neighborhood. Originally the buildings were a parochial school and convent for Christ the King Catholic church, and most recently were office space. They've been vacant since 2005, and after the final flood in late 2011, the County took possession through foreclosure. Since that time the County has made several unsuccessful attempts to auction the buildings. These two blighted buildings have declined significantly and have become a burden for local agencies, including Endwell Fire Department and the Broome County Sheriff's Office. The Town, as stated above, would like to see the two properties demolished so a community garden can be constructed in partnership with the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome County, once again building a sense of community and taking steps to revitalize the community. The timeline for the project completion is 2nd quarter 2016. Estimated total project cost is \$200,000.

117.5 Main Street, Village of Windsor

The BCLBC is looking to partner with the Village of Windsor for the demolition of the rear structure located at 117.5 Main Street. The property consists of two structures, the rear structure that formerly housed four apartments and the front structure that housed two apartments. The property was purchased by the Village of Windsor from the County at a tax foreclosure in 2012 to prevent further neighborhood decay resulting from the dilapidated multi-family structure residing in a commercial district. The property has been empty since 2011. The front building will remain and will be redeveloped into commercial space. The rear structure is in poor condition and would be demolished to make way for a municipal parking lot. The Village is experiencing growth of its business district and as a result additional parking is needed. Once demolished, the Village will construct a free municipal parking lot to support the need for parking, and will create a green space for the Village, planting trees and flowers. The timeline for this project is completion in spring 2016. Estimated total project cost is \$50,000.

250 Front Street, City of Binghamton

The BCLBC is interested in partnering with the First Ward Action Council (FWAC) on the acquisition and demolition of 250 Front Street, City of Binghamton. FWAC is currently working on revitalizing homes on Front Street and enhancing the gateway into the City. This project is known as the Binghamton Gateway Homes project. 250 Front Street is a vacant, dilapidated property that FWAC fears, if not addressed, will detract from the positive work and tremendous amount of public funding that has been invested in this project. FWAC is seeking to acquire and demolish the building, with assistance from the BCLBC, and in

its place construct a landscaped greenspace. Timeline for the project is to begin in early 2016 with completion in July 2016. Estimated total project cost is \$84,500.

Future Challenges

Funding

The main source of funding for the BCLBC thus far has been the grant monies awarded by the NYS Office of the Attorney General through its Community Revitalization Initiative. As was mentioned earlier in this report, the funds are settlement monies from various financial institutions due to their improper practices resulting in the foreclosure crisis. The term of the current grant expires December 31, 2016. There has not yet been any announcement for future rounds of funding through the OAG. This funding has been crucial to the BCLBC because it has provided for both the administration of the organization and the funding for many of the transformative projects undertaken by the BCLBC. Now that the Land Bank is moving forward on several different types of projects as shown in this report, the Board feels that additional staff is required to continue the work of the organization. The challenge of finding recurring funding sources that will allow for the continued operation of the land bank office and its projects targeting blight and putting properties back to productive use is a top priority in 2016.

Properties

All of the properties the BCLBC has acquired so far have come from Broome County. Typically, the Executive Director discusses available properties with the County's Director of Real Property prior to a property auction and an agreement is reached for the acquisition of properties. Identifying additional sources of properties is another challenge and priority for the BCLBC in 2016. The BCLBC has signed up with property donation programs with banking/financial institutions, such as Chase and Wells Fargo, but so far has not resulted in any new properties for the BCLBC. The BCLBC will seek to engage the members of its Community Advisory Panel to provide leads for properties within their respective communities. The BCLBC will also look to establish strong relationships with its municipal partners to work to identify new projects and continue to work towards the elimination of blighted properties and the revitalization of our communities.

Broome County Land Bank Projects

