



**ALBANY COMMON COUNCIL**  
**PLANNING, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND LAND USE COMMITTEE MINUTES**  
**Alfredo Balarin, Chair**

---

Meeting called by: Alfredo Balarin, Chair | Date: December 10, 2025 | Time: 6:19 PM

Committee Members Present: Balarin, Chair ☒ | Adams ☒ | Clarke ☒ | Hoey ☒ | Zamer ☒

Council Members Present: Anane, Farrell, Keegan and Kimbrough

City Personnel Present: Shaniqua Jackson (City Clerk), Bryan Jimenez (Legislative Director), Robert Wenner (Research Counsel), Alyssa Kamara (Junior Policy Analyst), Carly Johnson (Junior Legislative Aide); Brett Williams (Deputy Corporation Counsel); Darius Shahinfar (Treasurer); David Galin (Chief of Staff), Harry Hechhouche (Director of Operations), Alyson Baker (Deputy Chief of Staff)

---

*Minutes*

---

**Agenda Items:**

- **ORDINANCE 63.121.25 (BALARIN)**  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 375 (UNIFIED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY IN RELATION TO ADJUSTING THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENT AND ADDING EXCEPTIONS TO THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENT
- **ORDINANCE 24.101.25 (As Amended November 17, 2025) (CLARKE)**  
AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 375 (UNIFIED SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ORDINANCE) OF THE CODE OF THE CITY OF ALBANY IN RELATION TO RETURNING THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING REQUIREMENT TO ITS ORIGINAL LEVEL

**Public Comment:**

- Alÿcia Bacon, Albany, NY – Opposition to Ordinances 24.101.25 and 63.121.25
- Andy Kaier, Albany, NY – Opposition to Ordinances 24.101.25 and 63.121.25
- Canyon Ryan, Albany, NY – Opposition to Ordinance 24.101.25
- Maria Markovics, Albany, NY – Opposition to Ordinance 24.101.25
- Eduardo Hernandez, Albany, NY – Opposition to Ordinance 24.101.25
- Tim Siquist, Albany, NY – Support for earmarking funds for housing repairs

**Discussion:**

- Committee Chair Alfredo Balarin invited Chief of Staff David Galin, Commissioner of Neighborhood and Community Services Faye Andrews, and Capitalize Albany President Ashley Mohl to speak on affordable housing.

- Committee Member Thomas Hoey asked about the impact of short-term rentals on housing supply in the city and if the Housing Audit provides information on it, to which Council Member Meghan Keegan responded affirmatively.
- Committee Member Deborah Zamer asked for the developers in the audience to be invited up to speak.
- Ryan Jankow of Jankow Companies and Jeff Mirel of Rosenblum Companies spoke on the affordable housing requirement and developers' struggles with current inclusionary zoning requirements. Mirel additionally spoke on increased costs as a result of tariffs and other factors which has led to two years of no construction of market rate housing in Albany.
- Committee Member Zamer asked what it would take for developers to build mixed income housing, to which Mirel responded that it would take lowering the cost of construction and Jankow shared that his company would require that any level of affordable housing receives subsidies.
- Council Member Keegan spoke about affordable housing funding.
- Council Member Sergio Adams asked if a density bonus might improve project feasibility to which Developer Jankow noted that there are different regulations for building construction based on building height. Developer Mirel noted that they are usually aiming to maintain neighborhood character.
- Council Member Adams asked if the drafted payment figures to buy out the affordable housing requirement allows for a project to remain feasible to which Jankow responded that the buyout would lead developers to additionally rise the prices of market rate housing.
- Council Member Owusu Anane asked about factors that lead to a developer's decision to proceed with a project to which Mirel responded. Council Member Anane asked if they can provide the share of costs significant factors have in project design.
- Council Member Anane asked what is being done to ensure that affordable housing is not built in impoverished neighborhoods, to which Chief of Staff Galin, Jankow, and Mirel responded, collectively noting that increased competition could drive income diversity. Jankow shared that there are abandoned buildings in these impoverished neighborhoods that have potential and there are people who are making higher wages that do not have to move to Troy for more luxury housing.
- Maria Markovics, Mirel, Jankow discussed owned properties and the impact of the affordable housing requirement on related projects.
- Markovics, Mirel, Jankow and Shahinfar discussed Payments-in-Lieu-of-Taxes.
- Council Member Anane asked if adjusting the AMI level to 80% would be an acceptable compromise, to which Chief of Staff Galin responded.
- Majority Leader Ginnie Farrell asked for specific discussion regarding the AMI and the different buyout levels proposed in the ordinances.
- Committee Member Clarke stated that he would accept an amendment to the ordinance that would [allow] for 80% AMI and adjusting the percentage of funds that would go to help new homeowners. He noted as well that he wants the buyout numbers to remain the same.

- Council Member Anane asked for feedback on the role that the Albany Community Development Agency (ACDA) plays in the ordinance, to which Commissioner Andrews responded. She noted that she was unsure of the level of impact the funds would have on home ownership assistance, but they would be helpful as the ACDA has lost funding.
  - Chief of Staff Galin shared that the Mayor's Office believed the funds would prove helpful to supplement home ownership assistance programs so that homeowners can experience fewer perpetuating issues as costs rise.
  - Committee Chair Balarin voiced his belief that the funds should assist tenants as these amendments to inclusionary zoning impact them more greatly. He noted that grants could also be established for small developers focusing on two- to four-unit buildings.
- Jankow asked that he be informed how to make the proposed figures work regarding the affordable housing requirement become a feasible project.
- Council Member Keegan noted that she would not support restricting ACDA in how they apply the funding they would receive from the proposed buyout.
- Majority Leader Farrell noted that due to external factors in the costs of development, a project may oscillate between being feasible and impractical regardless of city regulation. Jankow noted that costs are not decreasing, including the minimum wage.
- Committee Member Zamer asked what the goal of the evening is, to which Committee Chair Balarin noted that he was hoping for a compromise to be arrived through a transparent and public process.
- Committee Member Zamer asked the developers if the 80% AMI improves the feasibility of projects.
  - Mirel noted that any increase in the AMI figure improves project feasibility. Jankow agreed with Mirel and noted that there is no flexibility on the buyout figures.
- Committee Chair Balarin noted that the committee appears split between ordinances on the table.
- Maria Markovics noted that Housing for All supports at minimum a 5% set-aside for affordable housing. She noted that the \$25,000 figure in Committee Chair Balarin ordinance is on the lower end of buyout figures, and that she would have to poll her organization for sentiment on 80% AMI.
- Jankow reiterated that economic conditions have shifted making construction much more expensive and larger projects are becoming less feasible.
- Committee Member Clarke shared that he would be comfortable with amending his ordinance to:
  - 80% AMI;
  - Changing the buyout to a flat rate of \$10,000 per unit;
  - Permitting flexibility in the ACDA funding allocation;
  - Legislation due to sunset in 2 years.
- Committee Chair Balarin shared his response to those proposed amendments:
  - He was comfortable with setting the AMI to 80%;
  - Requested a higher buyout figure;
  - Certain restrictions being placed on the funding allocation;

- Requested a guaranteed 5% set-aside.
- Majority Leader Farrell suggested that we require a yearly report on how funds from the buyout were allocated.
- Committee Member Hoey noted that the federal government pushed inflation rates higher with significant fiscal stimulus. He also voiced support for a compromise.
- Jankow explained that regardless of the legislation amending, the developers will only build if the project is feasible. Mirel stated that developers outside the City of Albany have chosen to not develop in the city due to its restrictions.
- Committee Member Clarke asked if he should go point-by-point through the potential ordinance amendment and inquired about committee support for his proposed amendments.
- Jankow asked for confirmation as to how the buyout would work with the \$10,000 change.
- Council Member Anane asked Commissioner Andrews for additional information on how the funds generated from the buyout could be used.
- Commissioner Andrews asked for confirmation on who enforces the affordable housing requirement, to which Committee Chair Balarin responded.
  - Commissioner Andrews asked for additional help on enforcing the requirement.
- Jankow asked how developers should handle situations where a qualified individual earns more than the AMI threshold.
- Committee Chair Balarin shared his belief that keeping the 5% set-aside guarantee is more important than the buyout figures.
- Majority Leader Farrell stated that there is no guarantee that however an ordinance leaves the Planning committee, the Council-at-large will pass it. She noted that during the meeting, there was the most support for:
  - 80% AMI;
  - Changing the cost per unit of the buy-out between \$10,000 and \$25,000;
  - Guaranteeing the 5% set-aside;
  - Implementing a sunset of 2-years;
  - Creating a stronger enforcement procedure;
  - Outlining whether the fund allocation will be dictated by the Council;
  - Annual reporting.
- Jankow noted that requiring the developers to pay the buy-out up front would prove more logical and useful.

### **Adjourn:**

Committee Member Hoey moved to adjourn meeting, which was seconded by Committee Member Clarke and passed by voice vote. The meeting adjourned at 9:26 PM.

### **Meeting Link:**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GFkQ0Iwf8Yk>

Respectfully Submitted,

*Bryan Jimenez*  
Legislative Director  
*Carly Johnson*  
Junior Legislative Aide