



**HOUSING COMMISSION
Regular Meeting**

Monday, June 2nd, 2025
City Hall Room 110
11:00 a.m.

- AGENDA -

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: April 7, 2025

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

- A. Planning and Zoning Monthly Summary Report
- B. City Council Update
- C. Staff Department Update

VI. NEW BUSINESS

- A. Speaker: Nuisance Abatement- Resident Officer Suelter
- B. Speaker: Nuisance Abatement- Resident Officer Bradford
- C. Hope Fair Housing Lawsuit- Presented by Mas Perkins, Assistant City Attorney II
 - i. Reporting Period: February 28, 2024- March 1, 2025
 - 1. No warning letters issued

VII. OLD BUSINESS

- A. Affordable Housing Plan Updates and Next Steps

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, July 7th, 2025 at 11AM

The agenda and meeting minutes will be available online at <https://www.peoriagov.org/572/Housing-Commission>



HOUSING COMMISSION Regular Meeting

Monday, April 7th, 2025
City Hall Room 110
11:00 a.m.

- MINUTES -

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Staff Liaison Nicole at 11:04 AM.

II. ROLL CALL

Present: Commissioner Peterson, Commissioner Rivers, Commissioner Morgan, Vice Chair Boswell, Commissioner Hayes, and Commissioner Muehlbauer. Commissioner La Rue and Commissioner Sanders via virtual attendance.

Staff Present: Staff Liaison Nicole Morrow.

A quorum was established with those present at the start time of the meeting.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES: March 3, 2025

Motion to approve the minutes made by Vice Chair Boswell. Seconded by Commissioner Peterson. All in Favor.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD

There were no members present from the public at this time that wished to comment.

V. REGULAR BUSINESS

A. Planning and Zoning Monthly Summary Report

The Commission met the prior Thursday and there was only one item up for review.

B. City Council Update

No City Council update at this time.

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C. Staff Department Update

The East Village TIF did have their Commission meeting. The main thing that Commission is looking at is how to do some publicity around the changes that were made at the end of 2024 with the sliding scale versus the straight 50-50 match and then that program being free for senior homeowners that are in the TIF district. The Commission is talking through some different outreach activities that can be done by the City as well as with community partners just to get the word out about the changes and make sure the money is well utilized during the remaining years of the TIF. Matt Smith, Land Bank Manager and Chair of the East Village TIF Committee, stated that it's important to understand from the housing side of things that the TIF is creating quite a bit of increment, so the City needs to be spending a significant amount of money, which is part of the change to the program. Getting a spend of even up to half a million dollars a year is what needs to be used so that it isn't put into different projects. Sidewalks and things are great, but considering the TIF was created to be a housing rehab policy or TIF district in and of itself, it's important to be able to utilize that on the housing rehab. There has been an uptick of applications and even pushing for people that may contact the City wanting to expand some of their ideas on exterior improvements to greater utilize the value in using the TIF money. To make the level of entry as low as possible, there is an interest form through the City website related to East Village TIF. The form is filled out stating the applicant is interested and from there the Project Coordinator contacts the applicant directly to find out where the applicant is in the process and helps them through the application to the point that the applicant is ready for construction.

As far as promotion of the program, the City is working internally to develop specific mailers to the owners of the properties as well as the residents. If a property is owner-occupied, there will be a different mailer used than those that are rental. The intention is to continue expanding the use of the program. The program is limited to just exterior improvements, but there are quite a few older windows and such out there and these types of things are extremely important for energy efficiency as well as the look of the home. The program is capped at \$30,000.

There is some additional grant funds from IDA designed for homeowners for up to \$60,000 that includes interior. The target area is 61603 or the Southside west of Western.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

i. Presentation: Landbank and Code Enforcement Updates

Presenters Matt Smith, Landbank Manager, and Ashley Elias, Code Enforcement Manager

Ashley Elias, Code Enforcement Manager, gave a presentation on the transition the Division has recently made. The Code Enforcement Division handles housing issues, environmental issues, demolition cases, unfit cases, and a myriad of different things. There is a tiered system with inspectors at the very top that do the most, followed by code enforcement aides, followed by some summer temps that the City brings on during the summer. There have been Code Enforcement aides since 2017. Since then, the primary focus for them has just been environmental and it's been fairly successful but now their focus will be shifting to be split between both environmental and housing. With recent changes in enforcement capacity, there can be a sharper focus on addressing housing compliance. This also falls in line with the division mission statement: "Striving to educate, encourage, and serve community members to create a healthier and more positive Peoria". By strengthening housing enforcement, the division hopes to maintain safe, clean, and livable neighborhoods through strategic code enforcement. Code Enforcement has seen steady compliance on the environmental side. To go along with that, the division has also seen an increase in work orders and citations, evidence of sustained enforcement practices. Looking at housing and board ups, specifically housing and housing warnings, they have increased since 2021. Housing violations remain high but stable and board ups are

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leveling off, suggesting stabilization in vacant or dangerous properties. Housing case volume has remained consistently high, averaging 760 cases annually over the past four years, with approximately 860 cases currently open. Out of the 862 cases, the division expects about half of those to come into compliance. Environmental enforcement has been a success through Code Aides and has proven that the model works.

The focus is now being shifted to more housing compliance. Exterior property maintenance issues often precede more serious violations. By focusing on housing, it will create cleaner and safer neighborhoods, encourage responsible, continued property management, and reduce long-term costs by catching issues early. This change will expand the Code Aide role by adding exterior housing enforcement, housing notices, housing warnings, and maintenance reminders. Housing notices are issued for multiple exterior and/or interior code violations and serve as formal notice requiring a court appearance in administrative hearings. Housing warnings are issued for 1-2 minor exterior violations via a written warning with a 60-90 day compliance window with no court appearance required. There are currently two reminders that can be sent out with housing cases, which are the Housing Maintenance Reminder and the Gravel Driveway Reminder. The Housing Maintenance Reminder is used for one very minor exterior violation, providing a 180-day compliance period and no court appearance required. The Gravel Driveway Maintenance is reserved for driveways that are not fully deteriorated and can be maintained with supplemental gravel rather than full resurfacing, providing a 180-day compliance period and no court appearance required. These tools are designed to offer more appropriate enforcement responses for minor issues, reduce unnecessary court cases, and encourage early compliance through education and engagement. If the division will potentially be doubling housing caseload, some other strategies will need to be in place to try and push for greater compliance. There will be follow-up systems, repair assistance and compliance discussions, and public education campaigns.

Commissioner Peterson asked if the interior housing violations are complaint driven. Ashley stated that a lot of the interior stuff is tenant-based, and the City is solely relying on tenants to reach out and not be afraid if they are having issues with their home. The division tries to hit the major life-safety issues in a home and go from there. Vice Chair Boswell asked with the interior violations the City is being asked to look at, is there a way to tag the information with funding. When there's rehab funding, it's for the exterior of homes. Vice Chair Boswell asked if the City is seeing these violations, can the violations be a cause or a reason to increase or provide funding for interior funding with the data. Matt Smith stated that the City is really locked in for the grants that the City gets. The City has more of an ability to get people on the track with saving with programs such as the East-Village TIF because it's local dollars, but when it comes to most of the other rehab programs, they are based on either federal funding or state funding through IDA, which often means that the funding is so limited that the City doesn't have the ability to transfer stuff straight into the rehab program. The City knows that the need is great, and the City is always putting in these grant applications that the City has housing violations that far outstrip the availability of the grant funding and the City always asks for the maximum amount. The grants often state that the funding can be utilized for exterior work.

Matt Smith stated that what the Land Bank does is help promote safe and affordable housing for the residents of the City of Peoria. The safety factor tends to come from if a property is fully abandoned and the house itself is in a condition that is dangerous, then it needs to be removed and then starts the demolition process. The Land Bank also pushes out properties that come into the City's ownership that are maybe not unsafe and can be revitalized. There have been instances that the City has given over properties that are rehabbed and then put back to use. Matt shared a map of the City that shows where the City has demolished homes. In Census Tract 50, there have been almost 200 demolitions over the last 10 years. This was a large need due to those homes and also starts to explain why the assessed value for the area continues to decline. The Land Bank owns a lot of vacant lots where redevelopments have started. The former McKinley school is going to be redeveloped into new single-family housing through Habitat for Humanity. Having the density of vacant lots available for redevelopment has been the thing that has allowed the City to be successful in redevelopment in an area that has not seen new development in over 20 years. A lot of Code information is pulled in finding

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properties that have a high degree of not just abate notices but also work orders. When the taxes get behind, it also ticks a box that the property is possibly abandoned. Since the adoption of the Land Bank in the middle of 2021, the City has demolished over 500 properties that were strictly because they were unsafe. When possible, the City tries to find properties that are okay, but that was not the starting point because there were so many unsafe homes. The mission of the Land Bank is much more focused on residential than commercial buildings. The eventual goal of the Land Bank is to continue pushing out properties for redevelopment. The Churchview Homes that are being built, some of the lots in there the City has owned since the 1980s.

ii. Fair Housing Month- April 2025

1. City Council Proclamation-Tuesday April 8th 2025 at 6PM in Council Chambers

City Council will be presenting a Fair Housing Proclamation. Vice Chair Boswell is going to accept the proclamation and just say a few words on behalf of the Housing Commission.

2. Upcoming Education Opportunities offered by Prairie State Legal Services

Staff Liaison Nicole sent over some upcoming educational opportunities offered by Prairie State Legal which are a mix for homeowners, renters, property owners, and landlords all around fair housing.

iii. Annual Report- Illinois Department of Human Rights

VII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Affordable Housing Plan Updates and Next Steps

No new updates at this time.

VIII. ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Boswell made a motion to adjourn at 12:40 PM and this was seconded by Commissioner Rivers. All in Favor, meeting adjourned.

Next Regular Meeting: Monday, May 5th 2025 at 11AM