

Establishing “The Ulster County Land Bank Development Corporation”, A New York State Landbank

Referred to: The Health, Human Services and Housing Committee (Chair Walter and Legislators Corcoran, Erner, Lopez, Nolan, Petit, and Uchitelle), and The Ways and Means Committee (Chairman Gavaris and Legislators Cahill, Fabiano, Ronk, and Walter)

Chair of the Legislature, Tracey A. Bartels, offers the following:

WHEREAS, Article 16 of the New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law, (“NYS Land Bank Act”), authorizes municipalities to establish individual or cooperative land banks; and

WHEREAS, vacant and abandoned properties present a danger to the health and safety of local residents and reduce surrounding property values, all culminating in significant costs and loss of revenue to the County; and

WHEREAS, the relative lack of affordable housing in Ulster County has been and is a serious problem, now exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the consequential fluctuation in the housing market; and

WHEREAS, in accordance with the NYS Land Bank Act, the Ulster County Legislature deems it appropriate and necessary to establish a land bank in Ulster County, to effectively decrease the number of tax-delinquent properties, revitalize communities within Ulster County, increase tax rolls for the benefit of all citizens, provide pro-active tools to mitigate costs, spur investment and improve property values; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Ulster County Legislature that the not-for-profit corporation established herein operate in a community centric, collaborative manner, utilizing information gathered from Ulster County residents and subject matter experts alike; and

WHEREAS, it is the intent of the Ulster County Legislature that the Ulster County Land Bank Corporation’s operations, policies and procedures encourage diverse affordable housing options for a broad mix of income levels, provide for sufficient commercial opportunities, preserve green space and public safety and facilitate infrastructure development; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that there is hereby created a land bank on behalf of Ulster County, to be known as “The Ulster County Land Bank Development Corporation”, a New York State Land Bank; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, that the Directors of the Corporation shall create capital generating and revenue sharing programs designed to provide the assets necessary for the successful start-up and continued operation of the corporation; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the by-laws of the Ulster County Land Bank Development Corporation shall require the Board of Directors to create a resident advisory committee, which shall provide input to the Board of Directors and which shall be composed of representatives of the geographic areas in which the land bank operates; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors shall consist of 9 members, 7 of whom shall be appointed by the Ulster County Legislature and 2 of whom shall be appointed by the Ulster County Legislature upon the recommendation of the County Executive; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that said members shall be residents, or have their primary place of business, within the County of Ulster, and shall represent areas of expertise including, but not limited to: the building industry, architectural/planning and/or design industry, green space development, financial services, property management, municipal affairs, buildings and codes, real estate, building demolition industry, downtown and mixed use redevelopment and retrofits, and historical renovation services; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the following individuals are hereby appointed by the Ulster County Legislature as initial members of the Board of Directors:

1. Zali Win, for an initial term of one year;
2. Jeff Huth, for an initial term of one year;
3. Arif Khan, for an initial term of one year;
4. David Church, for an initial term of two years;
5. Martin Irwin, for an initial term of two years;
6. Rashida Tyler, for an initial term of two years;
7. James Delaune, for an initial term of three years
8. Jen Metzger, for an initial term of three years
9. and Nathan Litwin, for an initial term of three years; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that all members of the Board of Directors shall serve at the pleasure of the Legislature and members 3 and 9, who were recommended by the County Executive, shall additionally serve at the pleasure of the County Executive; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, that all successors to the initial Directors shall be appointed by the same authority and in the same manner as the initial Directors, for a term of three years, except that the filling of vacancies shall be for the remainder of the term of the vacant Director; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Ulster County Land Bank Corporation shall prioritize

- a) The provision of affordable, workforce, multifamily and socioeconomically diverse housing, the increase of the supply of such housing, and the reduction of the shortage of such housing in Ulster County;
- b) The preservation and restoration of productive farmland, including orchards and other agricultural productivity suitable for Ulster County; and
- c) The preservation, improvement and redevelopment of the historically commercial and mixed use areas of the cities, villages and hamlets in Ulster County, including the development and redevelopment of mixed uses, parks, recreation and public arts in traditional downtowns and “Main Street” areas

in its acquisition and return of properties to productive use and any associated programs and financial, technical or administrative support; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Board of Directors shall submit an annual written report to the Clerk of the Legislature, on or before March 1st of each year following the enactment of this Resolution, outlining the action taken by the Ulster County Land Bank Corporation during the preceding year; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the County Attorney is requested to assist with the development of the applicable and necessary documentation to accomplish the objectives as set forth in this Resolution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Chair of the Legislature is authorized to execute the documentation necessary for incorporation of the “Ulster County Land Bank Development Corporation” with the State of New York and to execute and file such other documents necessary to establish said Land Bank, including, but not limited to, other management, operating and administrative contracts or agreements, which shall all be subject to the separate prior approval of the Ulster County Legislature; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that the Clerk of the Legislature shall file this Resolution, together with all applicable and necessary documentation pursuant to the provisions of Article 16 of the New York State Not-For-Profit Corporation Law,

