

**COUNCIL FOR THE VILLAGE OF YELLOW SPRINGS
SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING: HOUSING
MINUTES**

Council Chambers 12pm.

Thursday, June 25, 2026

CALL TO ORDER

President of Council Gavin DeVore Leonard called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

ROLL CALL

Present were Council President DeVore Leonard, Vice President Angie Hsu and Council members Senay Semere and Stephanie Pearce. AVM/Project Lead Elyse Giardullo, Planning Director Nia Holt and Village Manager Johnnie Burns were also present. Brown joined the meeting at 12:16pm.

REVIEW OF AGENDA

COMMUNICATIONS

Pamela Nelson re: Concerns re: Glass Farm Development
Nicole Stout re: Concerns re: Glass Farm Development
Chris Zurbuchen re: Suggestion re: Glass Farm Development
Heather Hughes re: Concerns re: Glass Farm Development

SPECIAL SESSION

Goal 1: Develop a clear, data-driven housing strategy

Council briefly discussed and agreed to the provided definition of affordable housing as being that not more than 30% of gross income is spent on housing.

Council discussed the Bowen study housing targets. The question was raised regarding how Bowen determined “need” for the purpose of defining the number of various units needed.

DeVore Leonard raised the issue of crossing the line from Village to City and what that would mean for the village overall.

Mission statement was reviewed and met with general approval.

Goal 2: Advance priority Village-led housing initiatives

Burns noted that the Phase 1 Environmental study has been completed and that the appraisal on that portion of the Glass Farm should be back in the next two-to-three weeks.

Burns described how he envisions putting together an RFQ for the area, stressing the need for community input.

Brown advocated for conservation development and zero energy ready housing.

Hsu spoke to the need to discuss housing on the Glass Farm in a productive way.

Hsu touched on the proposal for tiny homes as an aspect of considering unique ideas as potential approaches to housing.

DeVore Leonard suggested a charette to disseminate and gather information.

Burns stressed that Council should take the lead on a charette process.

Holt clarified that she can assure a clear information and engagement timeline which fully involves Council as communicators.

There was general agreement that there should be increased communication and engagement now that Council has reached agreement regarding the process.

Council generally agreed that Brown, Hsu and Holt would work on the communication/outreach timeline and provide information for the July 20th Council meeting.

DeVore raised the issue of residents who need to downsize. Options were discussed.

Hsu suggested gathering data from seniors who are considering downsizing so that there is concrete data available. LEAF was suggested as a resource for gathering that data.

The idea of purchasing pre-made energy-efficient tiny homes was discussed as an efficient way to develop. Whether this concept can be applied to large scale projects was discussed.

DeVore Leonard clarified that Council is making the determination that the focus will be on affordable housing on the Glass Farm, which means that other options are off the table so that Glass Farm housing can be prioritized and staff resources used for that purpose.

Goal 3: Strengthen policies and tools for rental housing management

Pearce noted that she has been working on a Council Town Hall, tentatively at the end of July, to discuss rental housing management. She has developed a survey and met with Holt regarding timelines for some of the proposed policies.

Pearce stated her understanding that community buy-in and an informational process is key to potential implementation process.

The idea of starting with the rental registry first and looking at the possibility of adding inspections at a later point was favorably discussed.

Holt suggested providing informational tools immediately.

Pearce stated that she has a number of informational resources available and might suggest creating a brochure.

That idea, and what capacity may be needed to accomplish some of these pieces was discussed.

Pearce commented that she has a number of examples to bring to the table, but that it is important to find the right fit for the community.

The challenges of gathering accurate information on the needs of renters was acknowledged.

Burns stated that Village staff are not able to enter any private property without permission of the homeowner.

Holt noted several tools available to address this challenge.

DeVore Leonard acknowledged the need to do something, but to take great care in that process so that greater harm is not created.

Holt commented that regulating commercial properties is very challenging.

Holt suggested holding the community conversation and following up with the conversation regarding code enforcement at a later date.

Goal 4: Prioritize environmental sustainability and energy efficiency into housing-related decisions

Brown provided information on pre-fabricated zero energy ready housing standards.

Brown suggested a Town Hall regarding this type of housing so that villagers could have their concerns addressed by professionals in the field.

Hsu raised a concern regarding potentially higher cost for these types of houses.

Brown disagreed that cost would be significantly higher and again suggested bringing in speakers to address concerns.

Holt stated that she has a contact in terms of a speaker and will work with Brown regarding a Town Hall or similar session.

Goal 5: Evaluate zoning code vis-à-vis housing goals

Holt presented her analysis of the Zoning Code and Comprehensive Land Use Plan as it relates to current housing goals.

Holt noted that the Village code is highly diverse and forward-thinking, and there is readily accessible information regarding infrastructure on staff.

Holt asserted that the conditional use review process can have a chilling effect on development,

as, she said, as can parking requirements. She suggested increasing the number of by-right uses and decreasing the number of requirements (such as parking or bike racks).

Holt further suggested incentivizing some construction options such as accessible doors, etc.

Holt suggested permitting pocket neighborhoods and “cottage courts” as a means to address both availability and affordability.

Holt opined that increasing access to more housing options is readily obtainable. She suggested that parking requirements, conditional use requirements and incentives be reviewed.

DeVore Leonard asked whether there is a means or appetite for decreasing access to building single-family homes.

Goal 6: Evaluate and advance Lawson Place Apartments as a Village-owned housing asset

Giardullo presented the proforma, which was developed by Mark Schweiterman of the Shared Resource Center.

Burns followed up, noting upgrades to the property and the extent of Village support required. He commented that the project basically breaks even financially, but is run as a community good.

DeVore Leonard commented that the project will be profitable the farther out the proforma is taken. He raised the possibility of increasing this type of project with the idea that once there is critical mass a property manager who is also a Village employee could be hired.

Brown questioned the idea of the Village as a property manager. This was discussed.

Council agreed that the project has been worthy and effective. DeVore Leonard asked that the Village remain open to available possibilities and when found that these be considered.

Goal 7: Explore policy tools to encourage property utilization and reduce vacancies.

Semere noted that the topic is only being discussed, with no intent of forward action at this point, since it is not yet clear how many units are vacant more than 50% of the year. He noted that fees cannot be implemented.

Semere commented that the tracking needed for implementing such a thing would likely be in excess of any value, but that first it is necessary to determine how many properties are being considered.

Semere commented that he is primarily interested in considering commercial property for these tools. He stated that there are means to fine businesses that stand vacant for large stretches of time.

Council decided not to address the matter of fines currently.

DeVore Leonard brought up the idea of offering incentives to home sellers to prioritize buyers who are likely to live full time in the village.

The idea of revising CRA legislation was raised as a possibility.

Next Steps

Hsu noted that the dialogue and information process will continue through use of Work Sessions.

Hsu noted that there is no one person charged with oversight of the entire process. She asked how Council wants to move forward now that goals have been established.

Burns commented that he will follow up with Bowen, since the final piece is to review the study.

Giardullo: return with Bowen timeline; find date for Work Session; Special Report re: what happens if VYS becomes a city; collaboration with Pearce regarding a timeline for rental registry information.

ADJOURNMENT

At 4:30pm, DeVore Leonard MOVED and Brown SECONDED a MOTION TO ADJOURN. The MOTION PASSED 5-0 ON A VOICE VOTE.

The Village of Yellow Springs is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities. Any person requiring a disability accommodation should contact the Village, Clerk of Council's Office at 767-9126 or via e-mail at clerk@yso.com for more information.