

A Citizen's Report
on
A Public Hearing
and on
A Meeting of the Corning City Council

December 1, 2025

PUBLIC HEARING

The Council for the City of Corning, New York held a public hearing at 6:00 p.m. at Council Chambers, Civic Center Plaza, Corning, New York.

All Councilmembers attended the hearing except Councilmember Muccini. Counting City of Corning employees, fourteen members of the public attended.

The purpose of the public hearing was to obtain the views of the citizenry on the update to the city's 2002 Comprehensive Plan.

Background:

A comprehensive plan provides policy direction, guiding official decision-making. It serves as legal basis for zoning regulations. It provides the private sector and community partners with guidance and serves as a basis for grant applications.

Importantly, a good comprehensive plan builds confidence in government through public participation and transparency, reflecting the community's vision and goals. It builds consensus for how to adapt to change and respond to challenges.

The city received an \$80,000 Smart Growth Comprehensive Planning Grant from the State of New York to update Corning's Comprehensive Plan, which was more than 20 years old at the time.

On March 6, 2023, the Council approved the mayor's appointment of a 27-member Comprehensive Plan Update Steering Committee. This Committee selected a consultant to help in this work, Rochester based LaBella Associates.

To form a draft plan, the Committee met in public session with LaBella team members six different times. It held four public visioning workshops.

Approximately 225 residents of the city attended these sessions. Further, a survey of the public received more than 250 responses from city residents.

In early 2025 the Committee released a draft of a vision statement for the city as follows:

The City of Corning is the premier small city in the Region, blending innovation, history, and community to attract residents, businesses, and visitors. As a regional hub, Corning offers an attractive quality of life with walkable, well-maintained, and affordable neighborhoods, thriving commercial districts, advanced manufacturing, and abundant arts, cultural, educational, and recreational opportunities. Connectedness defines the city-linking people to each other, to the natural environment, and to the global economy. Corning features well-integrated transportation networks that support pedestrians, cyclists, public transit, and vehicles. Revitalized spaces and a strong commitment to sustainability ensure the city continuously reinvents itself while honoring its rich heritage. The City of Corning is a welcoming and thriving community for all.

Plan updates followed in March, April, and September 2025. Then, on November 6, 2025 the Committee held another public meeting to receive input on the draft plan. By November 12, 2025 the final plan was the subject of a City Council Workshop, and the Committee released the final plan to the public online the same day.

New York State law requires a public hearing on the updated plan, which the Council held at this meeting.

Six citizens spoke in support of the plan. Uniformly, they lauded the collaboration between Committee members, city staff, and the public; spoke of the many opportunities allowing residents of Corning to provide input; and described the plan as one derived from what the people of this city want. The cross section of cultural, occupational, and public interest membership on the Committee made the plan rich and meaningful, they said.

All six speakers called the plan "visionary" and yet described it as practical too. They felt that it has a vision that will inspire the city to achieve the best. It is also practical, describing things that can be done quickly, while preserving what the citizens of Corning value. Importantly, not everything hope expressed by the plan is the city government's responsibility. The plan also relies in many respects on the

cooperation and buy-in of partners, like the state government and private enterprise.

The Public Hearing concluded at 6:20 p.m.

MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

The Council for the City of Corning, New York held its regular meeting at 6:30 p.m. at Council Chambers, Civic Center Plaza, Corning, New York.

All Councilmembers attended the meeting except Councilmember Muccini. Counting City of Corning employees, twenty-nine members of the public were in the audience.

New Business – City Attorney

The Council unanimously approved the appointment of Pamela Gee of Elmira, New York as City Attorney for the period of January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2027. The city kept her current rate of compensation at \$220 per hour for the first year of the contract and raised it to \$240 per hour for the second year.

The resolution re-affirmed the policy that to request the services of the City Attorney the Council, city boards, or commissions must first make the request to the City Manager, who can approve or deny the request as he thinks best for the city.

Background: At its December 2024 meeting, the Council unanimously approved the appointment of Pamela Gee of Elmira, New York as Special City Attorney through December 31, 2024, for the purpose of representing the city in Corning City Court on November 20, 2024, and any other matters that may arise before December 31, 2024

The special appointment was necessary because the city's then-current attorney, the Maggs Law Office, PLLC, did not have an attorney available to appear on the City's behalf. The City Manager made the appointment under §C7-42 of the City Charter which authorized the appointment prior to consent of the City Council in the case of a special emergency.

Due to the election of the former City Attorney, Brian Maggs to the position of Family Court Judge and the closure of his law office on December 31, 2024, the city found itself without a regular City Attorney. So, also at the December 2024 meeting, the Council approved the City Manager's

appointment of Ms. Gee as the City Attorney for the period of January 1, 2025, through December 31, 2025, at the rate of \$220.00 per hour.

The City Manager provided no information about Pamela Gee at the meeting. A LinkedIn page showed that from 2013 to present Ms. Gee represented the interests of children in "a myriad of legal proceedings." Prior to that she was Assistant District Attorney for Chemung County for four months in late 2012 and early 2013. Prior to that she was an attorney in the law office of Davidson & O'Mara for 16 years listing work in litigation, municipal law, education law, health care law, insurance defense, personal injury, contracts, and appellate practice.

However, last year this writer asked Ms. Gee about her experience with the City of Corning. She said that she had been City Attorney for the period of 1997 to 2012 while she worked with the firm of Davidson & O'Mara.

New Business - the Council Unanimously:

- Accepted a \$50.00 memorial donation in the name of Dorothy Moore.
- Accepted a Steuben County Stop-DUI Grant for \$5,000.
- Accepted a grant from the Governor's Traffic Safety Committee for \$18,115.
- Approved the reappointment of Alisa Brown to the Planning Commission for a term ending on December 31, 2030.
- Authorized a transfer of funds from the city's contingency account to buy software contract renewals and General Code Book Supplement updates.

Announcements – Mayor and Councilmembers

Mayor Boland presented a plaque to outgoing Councilmember, Mark ReSue, saying that Mr. ReSue always did his homework, asked difficult questions, was dogged until he got answers, and spoke to the interests of his constituents for whom he fought. Mr. ReSue thanked his colleagues on the Council and the city staff, saying it was a pleasure and an honor to serve with them.

In the absence of Councilmember Muccini, who is hospitalized, Mayor Boland recounted the progress achieved and challenges faced during Mr. Muccini's 36 years on the Corning City Council. He described Mr. Muccini as a determined, faithful engager in the business of the city who could be relied on to dig deep and make his

views known without pulling punches. In his ward he was always a good neighbor and a strong advocate.

Deputy Mayor Clark spoke on behalf of the Council, reading a proclamation of thanks to Mayor Boland for his nearly 15 years of public service, his steady leadership, and his advocacy for civic engagement during times of both growth and challenge. The Council expressed their gratitude to Mayor Boland for his unfailing vision of hope for the city.

Mayor Boland, in his remarks, thanked the city staff for their excellence and professionalism. He thanked his fellow Councilmembers for leaning into civility in public discourse, saying that each would agree with him saying that, together, they have grown.

He recognized Mayor-elect Pam Walker, conveying his delight that she is the person following him. He has come to know her as a great planner and doer, but also as wonderful human being, and an effective communicator, who engages people honestly and without artifice. Those qualities, he said, will hold her in good stead.

He closed by saying that people, generally, are tired of negativity and strife. The solution he feels is to focus on the common good, on things that are not partisan, on the stuff that binds us together as human beings. He hoped that everyone would regain the ability to engage with each other, to talk together about the common good. If we can talk together about things that bind us together, he said, it will build trust and with trust there is always the possibility of great good.

Visitors' Comments

Two members of the public spoke to thank Mayor Boland for his service to the city.

The meeting adjourned at 7:05 p.m.

NOTES

- The writer of this report has presented items in an order different than the order at the meeting.
- The writer has, except as specifically noted, amended, or cut comments and attribution for them. Unless the writer uses quotation marks anything reported is not verbatim.
- For brevity, the writer has not included all items on the agenda of the meeting.
- The writer has added material for context or clarity and where it is extensive, is in italics and labeled "Background."