



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Catharine Young

Progress Ahead for Former J.N. Adam Developmental Center

CATHARINE YOUNG June 24, 2015

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Recently-passed legislation directs the state to produce a report on the best uses for the property

ALBANY – The long-vacant J.N. Adam site could soon see progress toward development following action by the state Legislature.

Under **legislation** passed by Senator Catharine Young (R,C,I– Olean) and Assemblyman Joseph Giglio (R,C,I- Gowanda), the commissioners of the state Office of General Services (OGS) and Office for People with Developmental Disabilities (OPWDD) will produce a report on the best and alternative uses for the property. The report is required to include recommendations from local government officials including the Perrysburg Town Supervisor and Perrysburg Town Board members, Buffalo Mayor and Buffalo City Council members, along with recommendations from state agencies including Empire State Development Corporation; the Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation; and the Department of Environmental Conservation.

The bill also requires that at least two public hearings be held as part of the study, including one in Perrysburg and one in Buffalo.

“The Perrysburg community deserves to have the state and local governments address the issues confronting the J.N. Adam facility. Numerous problems have plagued the site since the state effectively abandoned it 24 years ago. The situation is further complicated because the City of Buffalo may continue to have a legal interest in the property. It is derelict, a risk to public safety, costs taxpayers money, and an eyesore that hampers community development. This legislation will advance the best interest of both the state and the community,” said Senator Young.

“The J.N. Adam facility has become known for its deteriorating condition. As long as it remains in its current state, it will continue to be a dangerous place, attracting unlawful urban explorers and others who risk illness, injuries or worse when entering the property. Safety mechanisms put in place have not worked, and town residents and local government officials have asked for progress to be made,” Senator Young continued.

“The community of Perrysburg and the surrounding area has dealt with a large, decaying, and dangerous eyesore owned by the State of New York in the middle of the town center for nearly 20 years,” said Assemblyman Joe Giglio. “The cleanup and disposition of the J.N. Adam property is long overdue, and this legislation is a step in the right direction. It is important to recognize and thank the Perrysburg community and officials for their advocacy and patience, as well as Senator Young and Assemblymember Crystal Peoples-Stokes. I’m hopeful

that this legislation will begin the productive process of finding an end use for the J.N. Adam property in the Town of Perrysburg.”

“The J.N. Adam facility is in deplorable condition and it's time that something is done about it. I applaud my colleagues, Assemblyman Giglio and Senator Young, for their efforts, and I'm glad we were able to move the legislation forward. This is indeed progress,” said Assemblywoman Crystal D. Peoples-Stokes, Chair, NYS Assembly Committee on Governmental Operations.

Dennis Stopen, Supervisor for the Town of Perrysburg said, “We appreciate the support of Senator Young and Assemblyman Giglio regarding what they did by introducing the two bills regarding the J.N. Adam property. It has been a problem for our town for many years, so the Town Board of Perrysburg, myself and Mary Denea, of the J.N. Adam Citizen's committee, want to say thank you so much for your efforts on our behalf.”

Originally transferred to the State in 1948, the former J.N. Adam Developmental Center in Perrysburg, which consists of 44 buildings that were constructed between 1912 and 1951, was first used as a tuberculosis hospital and then later as a state-run residential and treatment facility by the then-Office of Mental Retardation and Developmental Disabilities, which later became OPWDD. In 1991, OPWDD determined that the majority of the 670 acre parcel was no longer needed; but the agency retained approximately 16 acres for the maintenance of a group home.

Since 1991, many of the buildings, most of which contain asbestos and lead paint, have begun to rot and deteriorate at a rapid pace. The Town of Perrysburg has now identified the site as a potential health hazard due to the continued neglect, disrepair, and lack of security.

Efforts have been made over the years to place the property up for sale. However, several legal impediments, including a right of reverter clause held by the City of Buffalo, and numerous environmental concerns have been barriers to the ultimate sale of the property.

Under the plan put forward by Senator Young and Assemblyman Giglio, the state, jointly with the Town of Perrysburg and the City of Buffalo, will examine and report back by December 31, 2016, on best uses for the J.N. Adam Developmental Center. The report would be required to include a number of specific factors, including: an accurate survey; identification of parcels currently being used by OPWDD; any legal impediments to any conveyance and other future uses of the property; the availability of funding for the temporary maintenance of the facilities; any improvements to the center which may be necessary to facilitate the sale of all or any portions of the property; environmental and other remediation necessary; and the impact the sale of the property, or any alternative plan, would have on the Town of Perrysburg and the surrounding communities.

“This is the most progress that has been made in years and it is a huge step forward in solving this problem. Hopefully we will soon see a day when the property no longer stands as

an eyesore, but as a shining location in the community,” Senator Young said.

The bill now heads to Governor Cuomo for approval. Residents concerned about the future of the J.N. Adam Developmental Center are strongly encouraged to contact the governor to express their support for making progress on the property. Those wishing to do so can submit a comment online at www.governor.ny.gov/contact or write to:

The Honorable Andrew M. Cuomo

Governor of New York State

NYS State Capitol Building

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