

NY Forward – Capital Region - Coxsackie

Subject	MEETING SUMMARY LPC Meeting #2	Date	Wednesday, June 28, 2023
Place	Village Hall, 119 Mansion St	Time	6:00-8:00pm
In Attendance	<u>Local Planning Committee</u> Mark Evans, Mayor, Co-Chair Jeff Mirel, Co-Chair Nicole Bliss Brittany Parks Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr. Jocelyn Lane Bob Irwin Michael Rausch Toni Carroll <i>Ryan Palmer (absent)</i> <i>Sarah Gray Miller (absent)</i> <i>Bob Phibbs (absent)</i> <i>Sam Pigeon (absent)</i> <i>Alexandra Tighe (absent)</i>	<u>State Team</u> Matthew Smith, NY DOS Amanda Bearcroft, NY DOS Michael Yevoli, NY ESD <u>Consultant Team</u> Ian Nicholson, Buro Happold Daniel D'Oca, Interboro <u>Public</u> <i>Anonymous (1)</i>	

Meeting Summary:

Please see "CX_LPC Meeting 2_Slides_Record" for the presentation shared during the meeting, which parallels the discussion summarized below.

Action items are called out in **bold-italic highlight**.

Opening Remarks

The public website (www.CoxsackieNYF.com) and email address for comments and questions (CoxsackieNYF@gmail.com) is shared.

The Agenda for the meeting is reviewed briefly.

Mayor Evans (LPC) shares some opening remarks.

Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct preamble is read. It is noted that no conflicts or recusals have been declared, but that some will likely need to be filed during or in advance of the 3rd LPC Meeting, as the Open Call will have closed and proposed Projects will be known.

Updates: Planning Process & Engagement Activities

Review of what's been done so far, and what is on the horizon.

Overview provided of Public Workshop #1 held on 6/20

- Review of agenda, format, participants, and comments received.
- Analysis of comments revealed thematic focus on
 - Walk and bike-ability
 - Open space and activation of the river
 - Parking and road improvements
 - Food and beverage options
 - Youth issues

Discussion of Vision and Goals to be included in Strategic Investment Plan and used as a basis in evaluating proposed Projects.

- Ian (BH) shows original vision included in NYF application as well as a proposed version that takes much of that language and condenses it into 2 sentences, while emphasizing the themes discussed in the Public Workshop. Invites LPC to discuss and provide feedback.
- Conversation about "affordable housing" as a term, and housing affordability as an issue.
 - Cost of fixing old buildings increasingly precludes affordable rents without significant public support.
 - Administrative burden of Historic Tax Credits and other programs is high, especially for individual land-owners and small projects.
 - Subsidized housing still carries a stigma that makes it politically challenging, even though policies and realities have changed enormously since the mid-20th century.
 - Village is actively pursuing a subsidized affordable housing project on the DPW site.
 - All agree that "affordable housing" is not a priority issue to be included in this short vision statement.
- Final Vision statement agreed to by consensus of those present is as follows:

"The Village of Coxsackie aims to leverage its natural beauty and historic downtown to create a safe, vibrant, and walkable 'front porch' on the Hudson River. Our waterfront community will be a dynamic destination for visitors and a nurturing home for families, offering an abundance of recreation opportunities, art and cultural activities, and a unique mix of housing and retail."

- Ian (BH) shows original Goals included in NYF application, a summary of priorities discovered at the Public Workshop, and a list of proposed goals that synthesize these sources. In asking for feedback, the LPC is reminded that these Goals will form the basis of 2-4 "revitalization strategies" each.
- Extended discussion about parking:
 - Parking on the sidewalk is an issue, especially on Mansion St where there are inadequate curbs to discourage this behavior.
 - No formal parking study done recently.
 - Confirmed that 2 parking spots per dwelling unit is a blanket zoning requirement, even in historic district.
 - Planning department is always having to issue parking waivers for projects downtown because there are no off-street opportunities for those historic buildings – would prefer a code that better reflects reality and can be enforced without resorting to waivers.
- Final Goals agreed to by consensus of those present are as follows:
 - *Leverage open space and Hudson River to provide abundance of recreation opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages.*

- *Support local food & beverage and commerce to reactivate the historic downtown buildings.*
- *Develop local arts and cultural activities.*
- *Improve accessibility and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists on public roads and sidewalks.*
- *Ensure the future of Coxsackie by integrating the needs of youth.*
- *Provide greater housing options and affordability to grow the full-time community.*

Downtown Profile & Assessment

Ian (BH) presents initial outline of the Downtown Profile and Assessment that will be included in the Strategic Investment Plan, including the structure, some graphics and images, and some key information.

Suggestion to incorporate public health data of some kind to support the focus on active recreation and mobility in the vision and goals.

Observed that there are some Dept. of Corrections (NYSDOCCS) employees that live locally but that it is dependent on state policy of how the employees are assigned to individual facilities.

Discussion about wi-fi and cell service in the NYF area as a key challenge:

- A new Verizon tower was recently added, but it was too far up the hill to help with downtown – the steep topography makes line-of-sight challenging – 911 calls from downtown would actually go to the tower across the river and connect people with a Columbia County dispatcher.
 - They need fiber and power. Downtown has fiber, and key locations (State Tel, the new hotel) have more than adequate power.
 - Mayor will reach out to Verizon, Michael will reach out to AT&T.
- Wi-fi is provided and made public at Riverside Park – does not cover areas outside the park – farmer's market vendors have trouble accessing it because the pavilion blocks the signal.
- Discussion about what would be needed to provide a public wi-fi network to cover the public areas in downtown – seems like it could be do-able – all agree to limit ambition here to the public areas rather than trying to get it into all the interior spaces which are complicated by signal barriers (e.g., masonry walls).
- Confirmed that the physical infrastructure piece of this would be an eligible NYF project.

Public Comment

(none)

Closing Remarks (LPC Co-Chairs)

Mayor thanks everyone for their time and commitment.

END OF SUMMARY