

## NY Forward – Capital Region - Coxsackie

Subject	MEETING SUMMARY LPC Meeting #3	Date	Wednesday, July 26, 2023
Place	Village Hall, 119 Mansion St	Time	6:00-8:00pm
In Attendance	<b><u>Local Planning Committee</u></b> Mark Evans, Mayor, Co-Chair Jeff Mirel, Co-Chair Nicole Bliss Robert Van Valkenburg, Jr. Jocelyn Lane Bob Irwin Michael Rausch Toni Carroll Ryan Palmer Sarah Gray Miller Bob Phibbs Sam Pigeon Alexandra Tighe Brittany Parks ( <i>absent</i> )	<b><u>State Team</u></b> Matthew Smith, NY DOS  <b><u>Consultant Team</u></b> Ian Nicholson, Buro Happold Daniel D'Oca, Interboro Marcy Monroe, Buro Happold  <b><u>Public</u></b> <i>Nancy Harm</i> <i>Bjorn Thorstad</i> <i>Pat Maxwell</i>	

### **Meeting Summary:**

Please see "CX\_LPC Meeting 3\_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](http://www.CoxsackieNYF.com)) and email address for comments and questions ([CoxsackieNYF@gmail.com](mailto: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 reviewed. Recusals on file are noted and LPC is invited to submit any further necessary recusal forms. Paper copies are offered and digital versions were shared by email prior to the meeting.

## Updates: Planning Process & Engagement Activities

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

Overview provided of local outreach conducted during farmer's market on 6/28.

- Review of agenda, format, participants, and comments received.
- Analysis of comments revealed geographic focus around the Library and Reed St, and thematic focus on open space and arts/culture.

## Vision, Goals, and Strategies

Review of Vision and Goals as agreed to by the LPC at the prior meeting, followed by discussion on proposed Revitalization Strategies (2 mapped to each Goal).

- LPC member comment that parking seemed like a consensus issue at the Public Workshop, and that it is missing from this vision/goals/strategies language – observed that parking is an issue now, and will only get worse with the increased business and tourism contemplated and already in the pipeline.
  - Some disagreement about level of consensus received – Dan (IB) reports that while it was broadly discussed, it did not show up on any of the participants' written comments, hence not in the workshop summary
  - Noted that parking was discussed at prior LPC meeting at length while forming the vision and goals – it was decided that parking should not be an explicit piece of the "vision statement" nor should it be a "goal" in its own right, but that adequate parking would be implied within the goals to promote housing, commerce, etc.
  - Further clarified that this vision/goal/strategy exercise is specific to the NYF program and will not necessarily apply to the Village writ large – Mayor assures that parking is an active point of discussion at other Village forums and a recognized issue.
  - Further clarified that NYF grant money cannot be used for the sole purpose of creating parking
  - Suggestion raised to look at satellite parking strategies for major events – can we provide shuttles?
    - Mayor observes that Village does not collect sales tax, nor does it get a cut of town/county sales tax – therefore, increased business activity downtown does not directly benefit the Village monetarily and cannot support something like a golf cart shuttle
    - Observation about lack of safe transit options for those drinking alcohol downtown – no taxis, public transit, or rideshare drivers active in the area.
- Suggestion to look at the housing strategies to make them more direct/explicit – the 2 strategies seem to almost be saying the same thing.

## Project Evaluation Criteria

Ian (BH) reviews the process and timing of evaluating the projects that have been submitted through the Open Call.

Question about timing of funding – depends on the agency handling the grant (DOS, HCR, or ESD).

- Follow up question concerning projects that are funded for a certain amount but then run over-budget – the agency handling the grant would need to assess on a case-by-case basis, unlikely the award amount would be increased, possible the scope could be reduced, or other sources of funding would

need to be identified – if project becomes infeasible or canceled as a result, the grant money would be re-allocated to another project in Coxsackie thru a separate process.

Multiple questions about the evaluation process – reiterated that this process will play out over the next couple of months as the consultant and state teams work to develop the projects with the sponsors. LPC will provide initial evaluation based on information provided in the applications, an updated evaluation after the 4<sup>th</sup> LPC meeting, and then a final up/down vote on the completed project profiles at the 5<sup>th</sup> LPC meeting on 10/18.

- The grant requests included in the initial applications can be discussed with and modified by the Sponsors over the course of the project development period, but the final vote at LPC-5 will be up or down – no unilateral changing of the funding amounts.

### Submitted Projects

Ian (BH) reviews some high-level analysis of the projects received: 20 projects from 12 unique sponsors representing about \$9.25 million in grant funding requested.

Marcy (BH) presents each of 20 submitted projects in turn, with discussion among the LPC for each. The intent here was to broadly familiarize the LPC with the Projects submitted.

1. Housing at DPW site
  - a. Question about fitting parking for all 68 units – experienced developer has looked at it and is not concerned – it’s a deceptively large lot – a conceptual site plan will be required before final vote to confirm this.
  - b. Question about impact of this scale of project on the street – observed that project of this scale would be subject to the usual environmental and traffic studies before the appropriate municipal authority having jurisdiction.
  - c. Observed that the developer should probably be the Sponsor, rather than the Village, since they will be managing the project, fronting the money, and receiving the reimbursement.
  - d. Question about historic regulations – no, this site is outside the historic district and would not be subject to any historic reviews.
  - e. Observation from Jeff (LPC Co-Chair) that artist housing programs have provisions that allow for units to be opened up to all income-qualified applicants if the demand from artist applicants isn’t sufficient to fill the space, and at 68 units it’s likely that will happen in this case – not a bad thing, just something to be aware of.
2. Downtown branding
  - a. Generally, more detail is needed to explain exactly what’s being pursued (and costed) here – e.g., is marketing involved as well as branding? What kind of signage and where?
  - b. Discussion about signage outside the NYF boundary – LPC is in broad agreement that the highest-impact signage would all be located outside the boundary, specifically 1) near the Thruway exit, 2) near the 9W/385 intersection, 3) where Mansion and 385 diverge at the “church corner”, and 4) where Ely St splits from 385. Matt (DOS) agrees to follow-up about this internally to see if this can be accommodated in this case.
3. Pedestrian infrastructure
  - a. Suggestion to include Mansion St within this scope.
  - b. Suggestion to include bringing some uniformity to the various poles – either under this scope, or the one above.
  - c. A lot of support expressed for installing additional crosswalks.
  - d. Observed that recent survey indicates that Village may not actually own portions of Betke Blvd... Mayor will keep the LPC posted as the situation develops.
4. Splash Pad

- a. Discussion about O&M – should be minimal, no moving parts, user-operated to an extent, water is not on constantly but rather on-demand – no recycling contemplated as it introduces a mini-treatment plant that would balloon costs.
  - b. Discussion about aesthetics – Riverside Park is so beautiful, don't want a gaudy playground type facility interrupting that – a conceptual design would need to be completed before final LPC vote.
  - c. Question about whether it would need to be fenced – Mayor's understanding from OPRHP is that it would. Will confirm this and investigate if there's any way to avoid it.
5. Visitor's Center and Museum
    - a. Very supportive comments. Only concern is the price tag, but acknowledged that its an old shell of a building with no functioning systems currently.
  6. Bank Rehabilitation
    - a. No comments, generally supportive.
  7. Event Space/Kitchen
    - a. Clarification from Sponsor that 20% match is proposed (as required – application seemed to ask for 100% NYF funding).
  8. 5-7 Mansion mixed-use renovation
    - a. No comments or questions.
  9. Downtown cell service
    - a. What about wifi? – Mayor discussed this with State Tel and they feel that cell service is a better investment for the public realm
    - b. Is the price realistic? – Mayor says its based on their recent cell tower addition behind the warehouse – there may be some inflation in the meantime, but need to develop the deal further – it won't happen here without some kind of incentive.
    - c. Continued enthusiasm from the LPC around this idea, feeling that it meets many of the local and program goals, including public safety.
  10. Hubbell House
    - a. Skepticism from some members that supporting a short-term rental project would be a good use of public funds.
  11. 1-3-5 Riverside Ave new housing
    - a. Observed that application is missing a lot of crucial detail. LPC will need to see site plan, building plan/elevation, and some kind of rendering.
    - b. Unclear what is meant by "duplex" – how many units total are being proposed?
  12. McQuade Hotel
    - a. More information on what is proposed is needed: floor plans, # of keys, parking, etc.
  13. HVWR rehabilitation
    - a. Clarified that the "housing" is temporary housing for writers-in-residence, roughly 25-30 per year, about 6 at a time.
    - b. Sponsor is currently a for-profit LLC, but has expressed willingness to convert ownership to a non-profit if that would be helpful.
  14. 7 Ely Coffee Shop
    - a. No comments or questions.
  15. 9-11 Mansion mixed-use renovation
    - a. Observed that the sponsor is also the Village police chief.
    - b. Discussion about Babars Vintage Guitars – very unique and interesting shop that's an asset for the Village, but it's only open by appointment so its challenging to think of it contributing to the public realm – wondering if a capital project here could support expanded hours of some kind.
  16. Eagle Hotel renovation
    - a. General enthusiasm from LPC members particularly as regards addressing stormwater issues around this site.
  17. Night Owl Arts Campus

- a. LPC members confused about where this pavilion would go – it's very steep in that area across from the Wire – observed that the Sponsor is not local yet, moving in August.
- 18. Dolan Block Renovation
  - a. Concern from some LPC members that this project has already received State grant money, why does it need more?
  - b. Observation that this property is a cornerstone piece to revitalizing the downtown area given its prominence on S River St and the waterfront.
- 19. 2-6 Reed St mixed-use renovation
  - a. Where is parking for this? – Apparently, there's some in the back. Should also be observed that proposal does not increase residential density.
- 20. Access for All at Heermance Library
  - a. Observed that the request is quite high, and nearly-100% grant request.

Public Comment

Bjorn adds some description of the 7 Ely Coffee Shop owl mural.

END OF SUMMARY