

Plattsburgh (C) Harborside Master Plan
Project Advisory Committee Kickoff Meeting
July 2, 2021 @ 10:00am – In-person / Video Conference
Plattsburgh City Hall



SUMMARY NOTES

Attendees:

Committee Members

- Julie Baughn, ZBA & Farmers Market Mgr
- Shannon Thayer, Clinton County Planner
- Kim Manion, Business Owner
- Liou Xie, SUNY Plattsburgh & Clinton Co. PB
- Jacob Avery, City Resident
- Michael Bessette, DPW
- Jim Abdallah, Planning Board Chair
- Jared Hogle, Outdoor enthusiast
- Jeff Moore, City Councilor
- Jon Ruff, Environmental Manager
- Ethan Vinson, CDO
- Matthew Miller, CDO

Consultant Team

- Bob Murphy, Barton & Loguidice
- Leigh Jones, Barton & Loguidice
- Todd Poole, 4ward Planning
- Paul Werner, Hadley Exhibits
- Brian Jones, Aubertine & Currier

Others

- Barbara Kendall, NYSDOT
- Christopher Rosenquest, Mayor
- Aaron Benner, Boire Benner Group

1. Introductions

- Harborside LWRP Committee
- City Staff
- NYS Department of State
- B&L, Aubertine & Currier, Hadley Exhibits, 4ward Planning

Following some opening remarks from City Planner Ethan Vinson, Community Development Director Matt Miller, and Mayor Chris Rosenquest, Mr. Murphy introduced himself and the consultant team before summarizing the Harborside Master Plan scope.



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Harborside LWRP Committee Meeting #1 Draft Meeting Summary

2. Project Goals and Objectives

The bulk of this Kickoff Meeting was spent gathering an understanding of the background of the Harborside Master Plan Committee members and their vision for the future of the site. This discussion covered both introductions and individual goals and objectives for the project. Discussion included the following:

- Conceptual plans – 30% designs, shovel-ready plans
- Water Resource Recovery Facility
 - Embrace and incorporate
- LWRP – this site is the most important on the waterfront
 - Includes Saranac River Bridge
 - Saranac River Trail Phase 3 includes part of this area, connects waterfront and downtown and vice versa, access to waterfront and ultimately to the water
- NYSEG Saranac River Clean-up
- Canoe / Kayak Trail Hub

Committee and their Vision:

- Farmers Market
 - Wants to grow and be a focal point of the waterfront
 - Saturdays only right now
 - Had previously also been held on Wednesdays, would like to add another day (Wed. or Fri.) depending on vendors availability
- Green Street
 - Primary vehicular connection between downtown and waterfront/WRRF
 - Needs improvement and will need to accommodate increased foot traffic
- Recreational Amenities
 - Areas for kids to play, child advocacy
 - Want to increase access and use of the lake
 - Fishing points
 - Sailing program – from Wilcox
 - Waterfront should be accessible regardless of financial means
- Downtown
 - Perception is that downtown is only 2 blocks, connect the downtown and expand it to the waterfront
 - Polarized opinion of waterfront and downtown
 - Offer more activities, more to do
- Public Transit concerns
- Low perception of walkability
- Recovered brownfield
- Railroad going through the site is an issue
 - The Harborside site is isolated when a train blocks Green Street and Dock Street
 - Consider alternative access that can avoid train
- Subdivision work involved at NYSEG property and their clean-up of the Saranac River



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- On schedule to conclude river clean-up at end of 2022, then onto clean-up of the lake
- New pedestrian bridges over the river
- Events currently held at Harborside
 - A band shell/sound stage
 - Fireworks
 - CP Rail Holiday Train
- City's downtown has progressed from just a drinking/college party area to being more family-oriented
- SUNY Plattsburgh
 - Potential to bring more students and staff to downtown/waterfront
 - They need to become more aware of things to do, pretty much word-of-mouth right now
 - City doesn't focus on the lake
 - Need marketing towards SUNT to tell students/staff what the city offers
- Change perception of the WRRF
 - Tours
 - Embrace it and make it an opportunity
 - Focus on increasing access to the waterfront, communication, and programming
 - Make people understand its importance
 - Waterfront has historically been for industry, WRRF only similar facility left
 - Part of the evolution of environmental consciousness
 - Mayor notes that WRRF is a revenue-generating facility
- Focus on the river – bring people to Harborside via river
 - Add whitewater segment, like Lock 32 in Pittsford, NY
 - Create fishing spot
 - Focus on recreation – draw people in that way
- Destination and Experience – what are the reasons to come down to Harborside?
 - Rulfs Orchard example
 - Canalside Buffalo example
 - History
 - Concerts / music
 - Lodging and restaurants
 - Watercraft rentals
 - Park spaces for families
 - Wayfinding
- Consider what is truly feasible
 - Build it and maintain it
 - 4ward Planning will help “ground-truth” the proposed scenarios



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3. Roles and Responsibilities

Mr. Murphy reiterated that while the consultant team brings technical expertise and experience with similar master plan projects, they will never know the site and surrounding community like the Committee and members of the public do. As such, the Committee's job is to steer the design decisions in a way that addresses public sentiment while the consultant team moves the project through the scope of work required by the NYS Department of State.

4. Next Steps

Following lengthy discussion from the Committee on their vision, goals, and objectives for the Harborside site, attention was turned to next steps in the process. The consultant team will complete existing report reviews, map preparation, and site reconnaissance before drafting preliminary conceptual site plans. The next Committee Meeting will be held in early fall to prepare for Public Workshop #1 sometime in advance of Thanksgiving.

5. Adjourn

The Harborside Master Plan Committee Kickoff Meeting adjourned at 11:30pm. Members of the consultant team joined Jon Ruff and Ethan Vinson for a tour of the WRRF at the Harborside site shortly thereafter.