

Hudson DRI Local Planning Committee Meeting #1

Hudson Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Date/Time: October 19, 2017 / 6:00pm
Place: John Edwards School (cafeteria), 360 State Street
Attendees: Mayor Tiffany Hamilton, Co-Chair
Matthew Nelson, Co-Chair
Antonio Abitabile
Jabin Ahmed
Shaheim DeJesus
Todd Erling
Betsy Gramkow
Michelle Hughes
Jeffrey Hunt
Joan Hunt
Tony Jones
Peter Jung
Christian Ludwig
Bob Lucke
Randall Martin
Elena Mosley
Seth Rapport
John Reilly
Michael Sadowski
Dan Seward
Colin Stair
Christine Vanderlan
Sheena Salvino
Sarah Crowell, DOS
Jaimie Ethier, DOS
Crystal Loffler, NYSHCR
Christopher Eastman, DOS
Steve Kearney, Stantec
Phil Schaeffing, Stantec

The first Local Planning Committee meeting took place from 6:00-8:00pm on October 19, 2017 at the John Edwards School cafeteria in Hudson. Mayor Hamilton introduced the meeting, and Steve Kearney from Stantec presented the attached slideshow.

This meeting focused on the LPC and planning team, and the DRI process and Hudson's application. Steve Kearney (SK) reviewed the roles and responsibilities of the LPC and introduced the DRI planning team. He also presented the draft DRI vision process and elements of Hudson's successful application. Following meetings will review information gathered by the consultant team

including the housing market study, and will also include specific proposed strategies for the DRI plan.

Draft DRI Vision Statement (based on the application Hudson submitted for the DRI):

Increased development of mixed-use projects that incorporate affordable and market-rate housing and transportation oriented design; workforce development; and re-imagining the waterfront for expanded public use and enjoyment. While tourism is a seasonal surge economy for the Hudson, the DRI application proposes to create an environment for high quality, year-round, living-wage jobs.

The LPC generally agreed with and supported the above vision statement. Discussion about the draft version included:

- Clarifying the meaning of “transportation oriented design”.
 - SK stated that this term refers to projects based around the Amtrak train station (3rd highest ridership on the Empire Line). This includes the design of streets, sidewalks, and open spaces to balance the needs of cars, trucks, pedestrians, bicyclists, and all who live or work in or pass through this district.
 - Warehouse project near the train station is an example of “transportation oriented design”. The Hudson Development Corporation has issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to redevelop this site as mixed-use.
- Is there a hierarchy or priority within the vision, specifically regarding housing and jobs?
 - SK stated that prioritization will be determined thru LPC discussions and public input. The waterfront is also part of the vision. The consultant team will ask the community, “what are your priorities?” That input will shape the vision and hierarchy, and change it as necessary. We need to confirm the vision quickly though because this is a quick five-month planning process.

Summary of LPC Discussion

- Did the consultant team determine an acceptable ratio of public to private funding for projects from the first round of DRI?
 - SK: There was not a set ration, it was project-dependent and ranged dramatically. Some were at 15-20%, others were at 5-6%. There is also non-monetary leverage regarding public benefits.
- The waterfront is an important opportunity within the BRIDGE District. How do you value such an important community destination?
- There are equity issues between the north and south side of the BRIDGE District that should be addressed (food desert, etc)
- The DRI application spoke to the great amount of diversity, especially within a small target area in a small city (beyond housing and jobs: arts, culture, tourism, small business development, etc). We need the community to tell us what might work. \$10M will be an incubator for many more things.
- What are non-monetary things the LPC can look at? For example, land use planning, zoning, and other issues.
 - SK: Team member EDR will look at zoning. Brownfield issues will also be looked at, but they are difficult because they take a long time (funding could support assessments to start the process).
 - Other ways to create opportunity: zoning and land use are good examples. How do you measure health impact on the community regarding green spaces?

- What about a grocery store? The Berkshire & Taconic Community Foundation has been working for the last year getting feedback about what could be done regarding food access. A fish market or a local market are being looked at.
- How can DRI improve food accessibility (easier to get staples like milk and eggs, etc)? Could we have a weekly mobile food market?
- Be careful with using the term "community", there are many communities here. How have other DRI recipients engaged diverse communities, especially marginalized communities who have historically been left out?
 - SK: Here it's north and south of Warren; in Oswego, it was east and west of the river. We welcome ideas about how to engage more people and who we should be talking to.
 - Sarah Crowell (SC): We're relying on LPC members to help engage your community and determine how to reach them. LPC members should be ambassadors for the DRI to collect feedback and bring it back to the committee. Public outreach is an ongoing process.
 - Matthew Nelson (MN): It's both a challenge and an opportunity. We can change the dynamic about how communities engage. Each LPC member represents a different subsector of community and can bring that perspective.
- how does this planning process get concrete? Does the consultant team bring forth ideas, or the LPC? Is there a list?
 - SK: The consultant team is starting to gather new ideas from LPC and the public. Projects proposed in the city's DRI application will be vetted by the team for financing, viability, etc. Projects are not set in stone though, the application is just a starting point. There will be a list at a later LPC meeting, and discussion will inform prioritization (together with public input).
- The process feels rushed getting started: some LPC members don't know each other, there's a lot to talk about.
 - SC: The five-month process is the state's deadline and it can't change. But we have already done this once in Round One though, so it works. The LPC could form sub-committees that meet more frequently in between full committee meetings.
 - Projects have to be ready to go, DRI is not a line of credit that floats out there. Projects will be expected to leverage private funding. Need to generate additional ideas to add to the project list for vetting.
 - "It's the meetings in between the meetings" where work gets done.
- Maps of available property in the city would be helpful. Participation of outside stakeholders, like the Governor-supported greenway trail coming thru Hudson and Columbia Land Conservancy, will be important.
 - SK: We'll have maps at the public meeting.
- Has your past experience produced ways to work productively with such a large group?
 - SK: LPC can take on extra responsibility by meeting in between as sub-committees. Scheduling gets difficult though, but some DRI's did that.
 - Jaime Ethier (JE): Oneonta did sub-committees along natural lines (economic development, streetscapes, businesses, etc). It was a quick but organic process based on group representation.
- Does DRI money have to stay within the BRIDGE District?

- SK: DRI is focused within the boundary from the application. There are lots of opportunities here though.
- SC: There is some opportunity if the LPC decides the boundary should be slightly modified, but the State wants to keep the area small to focus impact. A change would need to happen quickly though.
- The strength of Hudson's DRI application was the BRIDGE district's compact nature, so we don't want to weaken it by expanding too far.
- JE: There will be spillover effects though, like streetscapes or a marketing program, that will expand impact beyond the district.
- Projects may impact existing owners like Amtrak, the warehouse owner, working dock owner, etc. How will we work with them?
 - SK: "Stakeholders" includes property and business owners. We've created a list already, and can share it with LPC.
- Regarding opportunities and challenges – we can use this process to focus on the BRIDGE District, but not at sacrifice of the rest of the city. The LPC should think about other opportunities to help grow other parts of city, by keeping a list for CFA-eligible projects or other state programs beyond DRI. Tracking all of our ideas is important, even if they're beyond the DRI boundaries.
- Great that there's focus on job creation. Will team help us understand number of jobs created by potential projects? Is job training part of DRI? There is a large population within Hudson that needs training.
 - SK: Part of the team's analysis will be potential job creation. DRI-eligible projects don't include job training, but ground floors of mixed-use projects could reserve space for job training programs.
- Mayor: Regarding the LPC meeting schedule, would like to create five **sub-committees**: access and transportation, green spaces, job creation, infrastructure, and food access. Communication and outreach could be another.
 - Housing will be addressed by a separate task force (goal is to work with City and data from County to understand needs, running parallel to DRI process).
 - MN: will send schedule and sub-committees tomorrow via email. These can meet via phone and deliver reports to full LPC.
- What about more meetings of full LPC?
 - SK: Have five now, one per month. It worked in first round like this, but it's up to LPC.
 - SC: We don't want to overburden committee meetings, but also flexible to add meetings. LPC must invite the public though. Need public engagement plan, so think about additional outreach methods and times so we know how you're thinking. Consultant team can't attend extra meetings though.
- Can you provide an overview of the public meeting?
 - SK: We'll have maps and project information from the application. What's most important from community perspective? We need two things from the community:
 - Input on the vision to confirm it
 - Determination of shared priorities: We will have maps at each table to identify important areas, what they value, what their priorities are. Each table will agree on their top five, then as a group decide on about ten shared priorities to inform the DRI goals.
- If the final plan is due by March, then first phases of goals, priorities, list of projects should be soon. Is consultant team evaluation of potential projects within five-month timeline?

- SK: Yes. By December, we will have a list of potential projects. In January, we will share it with the community for input. Evaluation and vetting will be ongoing and continue until the end.

Public Comment Period

- There will be lots of opportunity with the DRI. What about women- and minority-owned businesses, in contracting and also for projects?
 - SK: team has minority and women-owned (MWBE) firms. MWBE firms are likely to be part of projects too given State priorities.
- Would the Mayor elaborate on the proposed list of subcommittees?
 - Mayor: LPC will break into five subcommittees to look at projects in application and new ideas. There will be lots of works between full LPC meetings.
- Seems we divided the Second Ward at 2nd Street, instead of 3rd Street (its boundary) and it's an underrepresented ward. We also need more people of color within the audience.
 - The DRI boundary was set during the application process by the city. We followed rules of DRI to create a compact area, but there's no specific reason to split the ward. LPC could look into expanding the DRI boundary since 3rd Street is a gateway and has more commercial activity. But, we need to be respectful of State process.
 - SK: LPC and people here need to bring friends and help spread the word. We will share a public meeting flyer to circulate via email, etc.
- Can you talk more about branding/marketing? You brand something when you're trying to sell it, why would you brand a neighborhood?
 - SK: Don't have much more info right now. Does the district want a specific brand?
 - For example, the Dayton Mall area is being rebranded as "Miami Crossing" to draw attention to new opportunities. A BRIDGE District brand would help raise its profile, encourage people to visit, and create cohesive look and feel with uniform signage, etc.

Next steps

- Matthew Nelson will organize a call next week to discuss public engagement strategies with any interested LPC members. Mayor Hamilton will email the LPC with sub-committee descriptions and a request for members to sign-up as they wish.
- DOS staff will discuss with the City a website to share additional project information for the LPC to review.
- Steve Kearney will send the preliminary list of stakeholder interviews to the LPC for further input and recommendations about who else the team should be talking with.

Next meeting dates

The group agreed to discuss sub-committee rosters and meeting schedules via email. Tentative dates for the next LPC meetings will be confirmed as the process proceeds:

- November 14th
- December 19th
- January 23rd



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- February 20th

The first public meeting for the DRI will take place October 26th at 6:00pm. The location for this event will be the John Edwards School (same as the LPC meeting). The second public meeting will most likely take place December 7th, 2017.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Please send questions, comments or corrections regarding the meeting notes to Phil Schaeffing (philip.schaeffing@stantec.com).

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

Phil Schaeffing, AICP
Urban Designer and Planner
Phone: (617)-654-6074
philip.schaeffing@stantec.com



Mayor Hamilton made opening remarks to kick-off the DRI process



The LPC attracted a large number of community members who had an opportunity to speak at the end of the meeting.