

Meeting Summary

City of Jamestown DRI

Local Planning Committee (LPC) Kickoff Meeting | 10.3.2016 | 2:00PM

Reg Lenna Center for the Arts

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mayor Samuel Teresi and Michael Metzger welcomed attendees with opening remarks. LPC members introduced themselves and answered a question posted by Mayor Teresi: “What was your first thought when you were asked to participate in this committee?” The consultant team and state representatives also introduced themselves. Meeting attendees are listed in Appendix A.

2. Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Overview

Kate Collignon (HR&A Advisors) outlined the process, goals and expectations of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, and introduced the consultant team, composed of HR&A, Highland Planning, MJ Engineering, EDR, and Cooper Robertson. Conor Muldoon (HR&A Advisors) reviewed the project context, previous studies and outlined the set of potential strategies identified by the City in their DRI application:

- Support tourism and the arts
- Prepare workforce for a 21st century economy
- Build connections to regional hubs
- Promote smart growth
- Enhance the quality of the built environment
- Foster a culture of entrepreneurship

Conor also reviewed an initial list of potential projects developed by the City for DRI funding:

1. River walk lighting
2. Waterfront enhancement
3. Historic Jamestown Hotel
4. Furniture Mart
5. Key Bank building
6. Streetscape and way finding
7. Shawbucks
8. National Comedy Center
9. Rail museum and excursion train depot
10. Reg Lenna Center for the Arts
11. Waterfront hotel
12. Jamestown Brewing Company

Bret Collazzi (HR&A Advisors) reviewed the anticipated schedule and work plan.

The project kick-off and community engagement plan drafting will take place in October. The existing conditions and opportunities analysis will take place in November. In December, HR&A Advisors will present a draft investment strategy and implementation plan. And by February, the Strategic Investment Plan for Jamestown will be complete.

Tanya Zwahlen (Highland Planning) reviewed the community engagement strategy and discussed its integration into the work plan.

The consultant presentation is included as Appendix B.

3. Discussion

LPC members asked questions regarding the scope of work and process, their role, the project boundaries, the project selection process, and community engagement. They also discussed potential projects for consideration. This discussion is summarized below:

a. Scope of Work & Process

HR&A Advisors was contracted by New York State to build on recent planning work and investment in Jamestown to develop a strategy for Downtown Jamestown and a list of projects that will provide the biggest economic impact and align with Jamestown's current vision for its downtown. The team is contracted through February, by which time Jamestown will have a strategic investment plan outlining the best way to allocate the \$10 million.

The intention is to select projects that are ready for implementation and to roll out projects soon after the plan is developed, but precise timing will depend on availability of other funding sources, partnerships, and the projects' stage of development.

Once the plan is finalized, there will not be another application process. The plan *is* the application process. Funding will run through state agencies. Whether funding is reimbursed or provided up front will depend on the project. This is not a traditional grant, and will not look like a traditional grant program. There is no deadline for spending the funding; however, the State's intent is to implement projects quickly.

The City and LPC will determine whether or not there should be a capital leverage requirement for DRI funding. Prevailing wage will likely be a State requirement.

b. LPC Role

LPC members are a source of information and a sounding board, and will steer allocation of the DRI award by reviewing potential projects. The LPC will meet monthly with the consultant team. As the process progresses, the LPC will review a "long list" of projects presented by the consultant team, assist in the selection of a shortlist, and review the consultant team's draft strategic implementation plan for selected projects. The LPC will both solicit ideas and introduce them. The LPC will also bring stakeholders to the table.

The time commitment for the committee will be through February 2017, but continued involvement is encouraged.

c. Project Selection

To guide project selection and implementation planning, HR&A Advisors will predominantly rely on project sponsors and past studies to estimate project costs. MJ Engineering, which is part of the consultant team, will also provide high-level cost estimates where necessary.

Formal cost-benefit analyses will not be used. Instead, HR&A will develop a list of evaluation criteria (to be vetted by the LPC) to assess which projects would have the greatest catalytic benefit in relation to costs. Projects that can leverage other public or private sources will be prioritized.

We are casting a wide net to begin. The goal is to think broadly, determine what factors may be preventing some projects from moving forward, and how DRI funds can most effectively be used. HR&A will develop implementation plans for each project, including phasing, funding, and governance strategies, to prime projects for execution.

Developers and project representatives may be invited to advocate for or present their projects. The LPC and consultant team will decide how best to use monthly meetings.

One LPC member noted that it is wise to develop actionable projects that create success stories. There has been a change of heart for what counts as economic development. Success used to be defined as transactions (e.g. bringing a new employer) but has shifted to community development. Investments in the public domain such as green infrastructure, walkability, and bike lanes have been shown to draw employers. This type of economic development has yielded higher impact, because buildings in vibrant places are appraised higher, and this aids real estate financing. Let's do the right projects, not the "right now" projects.

The timing for the DRI strategic investment plan will align with pending CFA applications, which will be awarded in December.

d. Public Engagement

Public meetings will set expectations and frame the context of the DRI. Jamestown has a roadmap, and this will be explicitly discussed with stakeholders. In terms of advertising public meetings, the LPC will invite their contacts to the meetings, the consultant team will work with the City to develop flyers, press releases and notices, and the City will advertise the meetings.

In a recent public meeting, AECOM provided sheets of paper to meeting participants and invited them to submit written questions. A consultant team member responded to those. This avoided the situation in which one person dominates the conversation.

e. Potential Projects

In addition to the 13 projects cited in the consultant presentation, additional ideas noted by the LPC included:

- Robert H. Jackson Center at St. Bonaventure
- Microtel
- Stone throwing course
- Traffic calming measures on Washington Street
- Two-way traffic on Fourth Street
- Youth programs, particularly education, recreation, playground, pocket parks
- McCrea Point access
- Synergies with waterfront access and waterfront development
- Upper-floor residential development
- Entertainment and attractions
- Connectivity
- Supporting a 24-hour downtown

4. Public Comment Period

The consultant team invited the public to comment. No comments were received.

5. Conclusion

Mayor Teresi reminded the LPC that the journey is as important as the destination. The \$10 million investment can have a greater impact if the journey is approached with an open mind and good intentions.

Appendix A: Meeting Participants

Local Planning Committee

Mayor Samuel Teresi, City of Jamestown (LPC Co-Chair)
Michael Metzger, President, Blackstone Advanced Technologies LLC (LPC Co-Chair)
Jeff Belt, President, SolEpoxy, Inc.
Vince DeJoy, Director of Development, City of Jamestown
Vince Horrigan, County Executive, Chautauqua County
Greg Lindquist, Executive Director, Jamestown Renaissance Corp.
Chloe Smith, Reverend, Zion Tabernacle
Luke Fodor, Priest, St. Luke's Episcopal Church
Jarrod Russell, Priest, Greek Orthodox Church, Downtown Jamestown Resident
Tim Smeal, Director of Development, Jamestown Community College
Pamela Reese, Dean, Jamestown Business College
Alexis Singleton, Owner, El Greco Furniture
Jeff James, Owner, Labyrinth Press Company & Brazil (cocktail lounge)
Reuben Hernandez, Owner, Havana Cuban Cafe
Andrew Nixon, Executive Director, Chautauqua County Visitors Bureau
Andrea Magnuson, Grants Director, Gebbie Foundation
Marie Carrubba, Council Member, Jamestown City Council
Jeff Smith, Executive Director, St. Susan's Center

State of New York

Lori Cornell, Office of the Governor
Sarah Crowell, Department of State
Chris Bauer, Department of State
Amy DeGaetano, Department of State
Diego Sirianni, Empire State Development

Consultant Team

Kate Collignon, HR&A Advisors
Bret Collazzi, HR&A Advisors
Conor Muldoon, HR&A Advisors
Walt Kalina, EDR
Tanya Zwahlen, Highland Planning
Brian Groth, Highland Planning

