

## ELMIRA DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (DRI) INITIATIVE: MEETING SUMMARY

Local Planning Committee Meeting #2

Timing: Thursday, November 02, 2016 3pm – 5pm

Location: Hazlett Building, 203 Lake Street, Fifth Floor, Elmira, NY

### ***Planning Committee Attendees:***

NAME	AFFILIATION
Daniel Mandell, Jr.	Mayor, City of Elmira <b>(Co-chair)</b>
Michael Krusen	President Southern Tier Economic Growth (STEG) <b>(Co-chair)</b>
Betsy Hale	President, Three Rivers Corp
Jennifer Herrick	Exec Dir. Elmira Downtown Development
Karen Cromer	Exec Dir. Clemens Center
James Gensel	President Fagan Engineers
Jan van den Blink	President & CEO, Hilliard Corp.
Katherine Roehlke	President & CEO, F.M. Howell
Norman Smith	President, Elmira College
Michael Wayne	SVP & Dir Marketing, Chemung Canal Trust Company
Bruce Chalmers	H. Strauss Clothiers
Nancy O'Dacre	VP, Arnot Health
James Capriotti	Owner, Capriotti Properties
Victoria Strobel	Student Representative, Elmira College
Adam Bunce	Turtle Leaf Cafe
Jennifer Miller	Director Elmira Community Development

### ***Staff Members:***

Julie Sweet	NYSDOS
Scott LaMountain	NYS HCR
Marc Wouters	Stantec
Setareh Fadaee	Stantec

### DRI Presentation

At the start of the meeting, members of the Local Planning Committee who had not previously attended were introduced. Marc Wouters led the presentation. He paused after each 5 slides for public and committee member's comments and questions.

In the DRI presentation, Marc:

- Reviewed the topics and schedule for the next Local Planning Committee meetings
- Discussed preliminary assessment of existing conditions:
  - Highlighted the cultural assets in Elmira including historic buildings
  - Showed historic photos of Elmira
  - Talked about the decline of prior industries in the city and across the state which resulted in many vacant lots and in a physically fractured city
  - Highlighted issues such as impediments to walkability, vacant upper stories and vacant storefronts (which were based on stakeholders comments)
  - Highlighted that storefront network is far more dispersed than in more successful downtowns such as Corning
  - Discussed the importance of Elmira's position as the east anchor of I-86 innovation corridor
  - Indicated the location of two main "anchors" in Elmira-Clemens Center and the First Arena
- Reviewed key projects identified in Elmira DRI Application and Elmira Refresh Plan, specifically:
  - Historic building renovation projects for upper story housing
  - Discussed the possibility of linking many projects in downtown to make a visible impact and a destination for the region
  - Improvement of public space "Clemens Square" which would link the two existing anchors and draw more visitors to Main Street.
  - West Water Street redevelopment project which will create jobs and new patrons for local stores
  - Support for small business such as help for small business venues like the viaduct/ promenade
  - Renovation of Clemons Square Parking Garage
  - The need for management support to make downtown projects operate
  - Waterfront park improvements
  - Cultural Connector between Downtown and Elmira College
  - Lake Street Bridge renovation
- Discussed the Elmira's neighborhood structure and emphasized on the importance of linkage improvements between the neighborhoods and CBD
- Provided an overview of local demand, residential market demand and national trends
- Identified the process of projects prioritization

#### Local Planning Committee and public comment

- Students call the south of Main Street, "the other side of the bridge" because of its poor connection with the downtown
- Comparing Corning and Elmira can generate offence or create expectation in public meetings

- Elmira downtown should be able to serve the region and not only the city of Elmira
- There is no hotel for Clemens Center and First Arena's visitors to stay at after a venue.
- Outlet malls can attract visitors from a large region to Elmira
- Housing can bring more people, attraction and life to downtown
- Downtown needs something big and dramatic
- People need a place to mingle and feel safe
- Financial support is required for the management of outdoor events under the viaduct/ promenade
- There are not a lot of activities on the Main street
- Should focus on establishing one successful block of Main Street near Water Street and change it to a center of attraction like Corning
- High property tax is an issue in Elmira
- Political will is the biggest attraction for developers
- \$10 million has to be catalytic
- Citizens should be patient and don't expect the overnight success
- Elmira College presence is essential for downtown
- Elmira needs a proper marketing and branding strategy
- Press release about the steps of the project should be distributed

Mike Krusen encouraged everyone to review the DRI application

#### Next Steps

After the presentation, Marc reviewed the public engagement strategy.

Public Meeting is scheduled for November 10<sup>th</sup>. The meeting will have a presentation, and work groups in which the public can bring ideas and comments about the DRI.

The third LPC meeting will be on December 7<sup>th</sup>

The fourth LPC meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 4<sup>th</sup>.

#### Public Comment:

- The Arnot Art Museum should have a better identification
- Streets and neighborhoods maintenance should be taken into consideration
- The Cultural Connector along Lake Street is important for the East side of the city
- People used to use the viaduct/ promenade under the railway for public market.

The meeting concluded at 5:00PM.

**Public Attendees:**

Mike Straight	CETR
Shaun M.Marks	Developer
Lynne Rusinko	Community Arts of Elmira
Joe Caparulo	CAE
Seth J Adams	Envision Elmira,LLC
Susi Brady	Envision Elmira
Amanda Renko	Star-Gazette
Beverly Kennedy	Private Business
Mike Collins	City of Elmira
Linda Sowers	Community Development
Kati Smith	PLNYS
kamala Keeley	Chamber
Robert Williams	CCVM
Chuck Lindsay	Elmira College
Al Lucarelli	write+Lucarelli
Bruce Whitmarsh	CCHS
Zsuzli Kadar	Citizen
Jill Koski	Cong.Reed
Kaye Newbuuy	CAE+HE