

## **OSWEGO DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION (DRI) INITIATIVE: MEETING SUMMARY**

Local Planning Committee Meeting #1

Wednesday, October 5, 2016 5pm – 7pm

Riverside Conference Room at GS Steamers, Quality Inn Oswego

### Welcome and Introductions

DRI Local Planning Committee co-chairs Mayor Barlow and Mike Treadwell welcomed attendees and each individual referenced their affiliation and whether they were part of the Local Planning Committee, New York State staff, or the consultant team led by Stantec.

### Oswego Downtown Overview and Background

Mayor Barlow, provided background about how the application was developed and talked about the issues that will be important to focus on during the DRI planning initiative. These included:

- Evaluating and expanding on the six catalytic projects identified in the city's DRI application.
- A focus on creating a more dense, high quality mixed-use environment between the harbor and Downtown to encourage better connections and entice the boating community to walk to Downtown.
- The potential impact of the 1850 house and other smaller projects on Downtown revitalization.
- Addressing challenges of Route 104 through complete street initiative..
- Building on and coordinating with existing plans and ongoing planning work in the downtown
- Coordinating efforts with local and regional entities involved in revitalization, including the city/county land bank and the Oswego Renaissance Association.

Jaime Reppert (Department of State) provided a background and a brief overview of the DRI program. He highlighted the importance of the Local Planning Committee in this planning process and thanked the members for volunteering their time.

### DRI Overview Presentation

Marc Wouters (Stantec) described the background on the experience and expertise of the planning team, including subconsultants, and then went on to give an overview of the team's approach to developing a DRI plan for downtown Oswego, including roles and responsibilities, general timeframe, and plan for public engagement. Mr. Wouters also described how the team proposes to integrate and build on previous planning initiatives in Oswego

## Discussion

After the presentation, the consultant team led a table-wide discussion structured around three questions. The results are summarized below.

### ***What are the opportunities that the DRI can create/benefit from?***

- Better town-grown relationship
- Waterfront/unique Downtown with Mom & Pops (2 votes)
- Tourism- waterfront (2 votes)
- National Marine Sanctuary
- Fort Ontario becoming a National Park
- Downtown has to be more comfortable
- More parks/greenspace
- More pedestrian friendly
- Creating connections/weaving assets together
- When people/boats stop we need to capture them
- High concentration of stakeholders in downtown
- Vacant land create opportunities (2 votes)
- Continue to develop towards lakefront
- Mixed use construction
- Harbor Fest is example of something we can do more of
- Diversification of business space
- Slow down traffic flow
- Completely transform how downtown looks
- Water St. Broadwell property= biggest op
- (Mayor- Discussion of impressions)
- Architecture
- Assets – cultural, historical, waterfront, etc.

### ***What are challenges that need to be addressed?***

- No grocery store/green grocer in Downtown area
- Making it more walkable
- No sense of arrival to Downtown
- Parking is an issue
- Need to attract more young professionals
- Transforming from industrial to something more like Skaneateles
- Thinking differently
- Taking care of things, "ownership"
- 122K residents who drive 30-40 minutes to go shopping- bring them back
- Surrounding neighborhoods are distressed

- Need welcoming, positive attitude (ties to poverty rate)- How do we attract middle class?
- Consistency of neighborhood
- Rt 104= biggest problem and how you can't cross it
- Downtown lacks an identity
- Need to focus on *quality* choices
- Mindset – i.e. Parking is *not really* a problem
- Waterfront- 2 city lots using for parking. Can we do garage w of 1<sup>st</sup>?
- Not yet a destination
- Why are we going to Destiny Mall and not here?
- Quality available commercial space
- Tying it all together- we have great ideas, will, etc. How do we tie together?
- “6-lane highway” cuts downtown in half
- Need diverse business mix
- Give family reasons for coming

***What is your top priority for revitalizing downtown Oswego?***

- Arts, culture, and heritage- we really had this before
- Children’s museum- creates quality of life- plus more things for families to do (2 votes)
- Connecting Bridge Street N -> <- S
- Re-engage in waterfront
- Improve arrival from W 104 Corridor coming in
- Tourism= \$ (why Marine Sanctuary is important)
- Diverse mix of incomes in Downtown
- “Growing People”
- Investment in streetscape (façades included)
- Increase jobs at all pay ranges. We need disposable income
- Understand market
- Protect our resources, esp. the lake- become a model
- In Downtown, you are 5-10 minutes from everything you need
- How can we encourage more people to live here?
- Connecting assets to create real destination
- Cinema, lake, hospital, many others
- Attracting businesses to Downtown
- Growing businesses already here
- Helping students/create new opportunities for them
- Zoning laws, codes need to be up to date, user friendly, flexible
- Convince people that the city is on the rise, not in decline
- Paint fire hydrant, “D-town guy” are great examples of small wins that make big impacts
- Details matter

Next Steps

The consultant team briefly discussed the next steps, which include finalizing the scope of services to be provided, developing a detailed community engagement strategy, and beginning the series of stakeholder interviews. It was agreed upon that the committee should meet on a monthly basis.

Public Comment Period

There was no public comment

Meeting Attendance:

**NAME**

**AFFILIATION**

***Local Planning Committee:***

Mayor William Barlow (LPC Co-Chair)

Mayor of Oswego

L. Michael Treadwell (LPC Co-Chair)

Oswego County IDA/Central NY REDC

Shane Broadwell

Oswego County Legislature

Stephen Butler

CNY Arts

Pam Caraccioli

SUNY Oswego

Patrick Carroll

United Assoc. Of Plumbers and Steam fitters

Jeff Coakley

Oswego Health

Jim Eby

Resident

Kevin Gardner

Chairman of County Legislature

Chuck Gijanto

Oswego Health

Zelko Kirncich

Port of Oswego Authority

Jillian Shaver

Children's Museum of Oswego

Jon Spaulding

The Palladium- Times

Paul Stewart

Oswego Renaissance Association

***City Staff:***

Amy Birdsall

City of Oswego: Planning & Zoning Dir.

Justine Rudgick

City of Oswego: Community Development

Kevin Caraccioli

City of Oswego: City Attorney

***Consultant Team:***

Marc Wouters

Stantec

Steve Kearney

Stantec

***New York State Representatives:***

Sarah Crowell

Department of State

Renee Parsons

Department of State

Jaime Reppert

Department of State

Patricia O'Reilly

Housing and Community Renewal