

MID-HUDSON DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

BASIC INFORMATION

Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) Region: Mid-Hudson

Municipality Name: Village of Sleepy Hollow

Downtown Name: Downtown Sleepy Hollow

County: Westchester

Sleepy Hollow is perfectly poised for a transformation into a vibrant community in which people of all ages and ethnicities will choose to live, work and raise families. With our history, name recognition, location, community spirit and diversity – having lived through the slump of the last two decades – and with the 100 acre site abandoned by General Motors finally sold to a private developer for a mixed-use waterfront development called Edge-on-Hudson: the stars are aligned for something great to happen in Sleepy Hollow. Planning expertise and assistance are needed.

For most of the 20th century automobile manufacturing was the backbone of the local economy and the largest single employer in the Village (nearly 12,000 workers at its height.) The downtown thrived. From the mid-1960's the assembly lines drew immigrants from Europe, South America and Central America. Italians, Irish, Portuguese, Ecuadorians, Dominicans, Chileans – Sleepy Hollow prides itself on our diversity. But in 1996 GM closed the plant, significantly impacting the local economy and eroding the downtown's customer base.

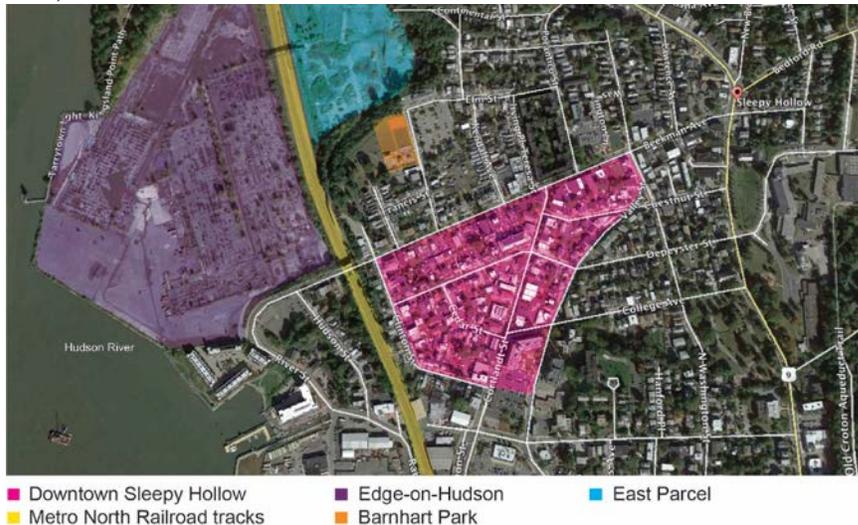
The inner village underwent a radical change from its former focus as a provider of residential opportunities and commercial services to the plant. It became a free-standing densely developed, predominantly rental bedroom community. The downtown is characterized by a limited mix of locally-serving retail and commercial, with a narrow market focus, geared predominantly towards neighborhood consumers. Rents are relatively low reflecting the marginal nature of many of these stores. The dilapidated conditions of building facades, awnings and signage are an obstacle to attracting consumers. With the present rents, and little investment in neighboring properties, property owners are averse to financing a considerable private rehabilitation effort.

Two decades later Sleepy Hollow is going through a massive change which, if managed and financed correctly, will have a significant positive impact on the region. On May 18 the developers broke ground on Edge-on-Hudson, hundreds of jobs are being created, employers around the village are expanding, a new water tank is being built, Phelps Hospital is exploring workforce housing in the downtown, the New NY Bridge will improve access to Sleepy Hollow, and the Village is embarking on a Master Planning process to revamp our infrastructure. One of our primary goals is to stabilize our inner village neighborhoods while broadening our mix of housing stock to create residential options for young professionals. We wish to protect our ethnic and economic diversity; ensuring that gentrification doesn't displace our working class residents.

DOWNTOWN IDENTIFICATION

1) Boundaries of the Downtown Neighborhood

Downtown Sleepy Hollow is the traditional, pedestrian scale business triangle of the village. It is bounded by Beekman Avenue in the north, North Washington and Valley Streets to the east, and Clinton Street to the west. Both sides of each of these streets are included



2) Size

While many Westchester County communities are more or less segregated along economic lines, Sleepy Hollow's residents include urban poor, working class and middle income families, and the affluent. Yet few downtown businesses attract many of our mid-to-upper income residents as they are specifically geared towards low- and mod-income neighborhood consumers. Thousands of residents satisfy their commercial needs in other towns.

The population of the village will be increasing by 3,000 people over the next 8 years, adding to the potential market for a vibrant downtown. ¼ of a mile from the downtown, Edge-on-Hudson is under construction and, at full build-out, will have 1,177 residential units, 135,000 square feet of retail, 35,000 sf of office space, a 140 room hotel and 13 acres of waterfront open space. 1,291 construction jobs lasting 5-8 years will be created. Edge is also projected to generate 602 permanent jobs. Edge is not a gated community; it is designed to be fully integrated with the rest of the village with easy access to the downtown and ensuring full public access to the Riverfront. Edge will attract people from all over the region to its waterfront park, water-enhanced recreation and high-end restaurants. Edge will have a commercial center, but it is primarily being designed around the convenience of the upscale residents, and will complement rather than compete with our downtown.

An attractive and appealing downtown would receive substantial support from tourists; another missed opportunity for us. With its literary and movie heritage, Sleepy Hollow is a tourist destination with brand recognition. Hundreds of thousands of tourists visit Sleepy Hollow every year, but they do not support our businesses, choosing instead to dine and shop elsewhere. So, while tourist spending has increased in New York State, Sleepy Hollow's economy does not benefit from the associated food service, transport, lodging and retail spending. Halloween and the Fall are our primary tourist seasons, but we are also home to a number of year-round tourist destinations. Kykuit, Philipsburg Manor and the other Historic Hudson Valley's properties in and around Sleepy Hollow attract 150,000 visitors per year,

Lyndhurst attracts 75,000, and the Old Dutch Church is visited by 20,000 annually. We also boast the popular Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, Rockefeller State Park Preserve, 1883 Lighthouse and magnificent views. Lyndhurst is breaking ground on a \$1 million landscape restoration project that is projected to increase visitorship to 150,000 over the next 3 years.

VisitSleepyHollow.com is a successful marketing tool for us, with 400,000 hits in September-October. And, with an I Love NY grant we ran a successful tourism marketing campaign. We wish our downtown to benefit from the direct and indirect impact of visitor spending. This is a substantial market, as 8.2% of all NYS employment is sustained by tourism.

Sleepy Hollow is also a haven for runners attracted to the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail which connects to the carriage trails in the 1,400 acre Rockefeller Preserve. Founded in 2010, Rivertown Runners' members come from all over Westchester, Connecticut, Manhattan and Brooklyn to the weekly runs and numerous races. Their annual half marathon draws 1,000 runners, and 900 (the majority in costume) compete in the Halloween 10k. The annual sprint triathlon draws 400 athletes. This represents a significant untapped market.

3) Past Investments & Future Investment Potential

The downtown will capitalize on the nearly \$1 billion to be invested in Edge-on-Hudson just 1/4 mile west on the riverfront. Edge will provide construction workers, residents and employees to support the downtown's growth trajectory. It will also draw day-trippers and visitors from the region and beyond. The DRI will also capitalize on significant investment by the Local Development Corporation (LDC) in the 29 acre East Parcel (see map.) This section of the former GM site is now owned by the LDC for the benefit of the community. The conceptual design includes a new Public Works Garage, 500 spaces of parking and expansive public recreational facilities including multi-use athletic fields, outdoor performance space, an indoor recreation center and a multi-use trail system with both east-west and north-south access.

The DRI project would catalyze significant private investment in three parcels on Beekman Ave destroyed by fire in 2008 and vacant ever since. Two years ago they were purchased by a local developer, who has since acquired the building next door. He is now negotiating with the owner of the contiguous, corner property. His vision is the construction of a mixed-use development affordable to millennials built around a gathering space, with dining on the first level, co-working space above it and residential studios and one-bedrooms on the top floors. He has spent over \$700,000 on the properties, but has advised that before he begins design he wishes to see the start of downtown improvements that would support his planned enterprise. He anticipates investing between \$10 and \$20 million. He is also developing a partnership with a second local developer to replace a building on Washington Street with an entrance/egress ramp facilitating a parking lot behind the storefronts on Beekman Avenue.

Our overarching goal is the creation of a 14 hour downtown. The complement of the DRI urban-style Downtown Sleepy Hollow, the more contemporary higher end retail at Edge, East Parcel active recreation, more passive recreation in the Hudson Riverfront public park and the RiverWalk connection will together create an exciting village, as diverse as its people, to appeal to residents and visitors. Achieving this goal with public and private investment involves making the downtown more inviting to village shoppers and regional consumers, attracting more affluent consumers without displacing inner village shoppers,

significantly broadening the business mix, creating housing for millennials and stabilizing the surrounding neighborhoods to ensure Sleepy Hollow immigrant residents are not forced out.

Phelps Hospital is holding discussions with the LDC, Village, other non profits and 3 Mayors from nearby villages to construct workforce housing in Downtown Sleepy Hollow. The project will provide consumers to support the downtown, stabilize the neighborhood, inject new life into the block, and stimulate new investment by adjoining private property owners.

Tompkins Mahopac Bank has committed financial support with discounted financing to participating property owners. For commercial buildings the interest rate will be 0.5% below their regular interest rate for loans of up to 5 years. A residence program is under design.

The DRI project will capitalize on \$6 million being invested by the Village and US EPA in a new village water storage tank, currently under construction on the Rockefeller Estate. The 1.62m gallon tank ensures sufficient drinking water for all envisioned redevelopment projects

Sleepy Hollow is applying for NYS Clean Water and CDBG grants to improve sewers in the downtown. If a DRI is awarded, New York Main Street funds will be sought for façade renovations. A NYS Affordable Housing Corp grant application is being considered.

4) Job Growth

Jobs across the entire income spectrum are being created within walking or easy commuting distance of our downtown. Redevelopment of the former GM site is projected to create 1,291 construction jobs lasting 5-8 years. Edge and the East Parcel redevelopment are projected to create 584 permanent private sector jobs, from service positions in retail and hospitality, landscaping and janitorial, through office and managerial positions. The two sites will also create between 18 and 30 municipal jobs, depending on the size of the recreation center.

Once property buyers begin moving into Edge-on-Hudson, the public school district will grow, creating additional teaching and support staff jobs.

Regeneron Pharmaceuticals, has been growing steadily and dramatically at their Tarrytown campus (3.25 miles from Downtown Sleepy Hollow.) Just five years ago, the company hovered around 1,000 employees, and today there are nearly 2,500 at the campus. Regeneron recently expanded their campus with the addition of 300,000 square feet of new research and development space to accommodate their growth and anticipate continuing to grow, although naturally are unable to predict an exact rate. In addition to their employees, Regeneron employs hundreds of interns, consultants and temporary staff.

Open Door Family Medical Center is expanding their operation in Sleepy Hollow. In 2017 they will open their new facility two blocks from our downtown, adding a dental program and expanding the New York Medical College Family Medicine Residency program, which is conducted in partnership with Phelps Hospital. They project a 50% increase in jobs, half professional and half support staff.

Phelps Hospital, whose 69 acre campus is a quick walk from the downtown, has added physicians, other health professionals and office staff every year for the last six years. In the

last two years particularly they have significantly increased their physician practices. In 2015 Phelps joined Northwell Health (formerly North Shore-LIJ) the largest health system in NYS and will be realizing the expansion opportunities associated with this new alliance. They project significant job growth over 3-5 years as their offerings change and expand. And Kendal on Hudson, a continuing care retirement community in Sleepy Hollow, is also expanding and has started construction of their new Alzheimer's Disease unit.

Additionally Downtown Sleepy Hollow is 0.25 mile from the Tarrytown station, with its 40 minute commuter train rides into Grand Central Station and the New York City job market.

5) Attractiveness of the Downtown

A traditional pedestrian scale, village downtown, the majority of the buildings were constructed in the latter half of the 19th century. Its historic character contributes to the charm and identity of the village. There is variety and richness in architectural style. Many of the buildings are two or three storeys with ground level retail and upper floor residential. Others are residential, the majority multi-family. Many of the homes offer beautiful views of the Hudson River, retaining the historic connection of the village to the river. Sidewalks and street trees throughout ensure it is very walkable, and there is an authentic neighborhood feel. Businesses, even grocery stores, are small and unique; there are no chain stores.

The railroad station is 0.25 miles away, but not located on any downtown street so that we are not plagued by hurried driving. Vehicular traffic tends to move at a leisurely pace.

Downtown Sleepy Hollow is bracketed by two well-used public parks with amenities: the Rev Sykes Park and Barnhart Park offer basketball, soccer, volleyball and playgrounds. It is also within walking distance of the Senior Center.

Unfortunately aging infrastructure has fallen into disrepair, visual clutter obscures the enduring character and deteriorated elements distract from the aesthetic. Lack of investment has bestowed an unnecessarily neglected appearance. Lack of a distinctive “draw” and bare-bones pedestrian amenities stand in the way of establishing a vibrant pedestrian downtown.

Residents need a more inviting, vibrant downtown in which to safely and pleasurably walk, exercise and meet daily living and social needs without driving to another town. Increasing numbers of residents and businesses will telecommute in the coming decades and the value of living in an attractive, compact and green riverside community will continue to increase.

6) Policies to Enhance Quality of Life

Sleepy Hollow is in the midst of reconfiguring our future, which makes us the ideal candidate for a downtown revitalization initiative. We are not merely contemplating an improvement; we are actively examining our assets to set ourselves up powerfully for the next stage of our history. We are reimagining our grid, which is over 100 years old. We are examining our municipal real estate and considering relocating to a downtown area that needs stabilizing specifically to improve public safety and provide a catalyst for economic growth. Village Hall, the Police Station, Ambulance building and Fire Stations are all being considered.

The Village of Sleepy Hollow has adopted Complete Streets and Sustainable Complete Streets policies. This initiative was championed by our active Sleepy Hollow Environmental

Advisory Committee (SHEAC). SHEAC is now working on Climate Smart Community Certification, suggesting improvements for cyclists and a Natural Resources inventory.

The Village is focusing on pedestrian transportation improvements, including a Route 9 streetscape project under construction and three planned (one already funded) at busy intersections. Many residents walk to the train, school, work, parks and shops, while others run to the Old Croton Aqueduct Trail and Rockefeller State Park for exercise and recreation.

Our development is transit oriented to reduce traffic congestion and promote a healthy lifestyle. Our two recent riverfront developments each include segments of the RiverWalk, providing pedestrian connection to the Metro North train station. Edge-on-Hudson will close the remaining gap, with pedestrian access along the entire length of its Hudson River shoreline so that RiverWalk extends, uninterrupted, from the Philipse Manor train station to the Tarrytown station and beyond. To further reduce commuter use of automobiles, Edge will provide a shuttle service during peak commuting hours to and from the train station, and a regular loop trip through Sleepy Hollow and Tarrytown downtowns is also being considered. There are also 9 Bee Line bus stops in and around Downtown Sleepy Hollow.

The redeveloped East Parcel, with its extensive recreation facilities and arts installations, includes a multi-use trail system making it readily accessible for pedestrians from all parts of the village and, via RiverWalk, the County. These facilities will become a magnet for people who want to settle in an area like ours. Additionally the Village has started a relationship with New York Water Taxi who has run their boats between Manhattan and our public dock during recent tourist events. We continue to work with them to identify other opportunities.

Sleepy Hollow is part of Slow Down Rivertowns, a new coordinated education campaign by 7 village police departments to promote traffic and pedestrian safety. Pamphlets, banners, stickers, lawn signs and manned booths at public events are used to encourage changes in driving behavior and voluntary traffic law compliance. Also the Rivertown Runners have started working with the Village to ready the infrastructure and community support for an application to the Road Runners Club of America for runner friendly community designation.

18 months ago the Village commissioned a downtown zoning study to identify zoning changes to encourage redevelopment. Subsequently it was determined that the need to reimagine our grid, examine our infrastructure, consider the placement of our municipal buildings and examine our zoning called for a village-wide Master Plan, which is now included in the approved 2016-2017 capital budget. The zoning study results will be fed into this Master Plan. The Village also intends to apply for an EPF grant in the 2016 CFA round to update our LWRP, which will also be incorporated in the Master Plan.

Additionally the Village is investing in our communications. \$30,000 is budgeted in 2016-2017 to redesign our website in order to make it a more effective vehicle for marketing Sleepy Hollow to visitors and keeping our residents better informed.

Sleepy Hollow has a large Spanish speaking population and our public school district does an incredible job of making the school experience accessible to those with a language barrier. Our English as a Second Language program is a model, with educators from all over the state visiting to learn about it. We also have a strong Dual Language program, in which children are instructed in both Spanish and English equally, with a goal of producing bilingual kids.

Our very active Chamber of Commerce is making progress in getting inner village merchants to meet and organize with the goal of being involved in downtown improvement. After many targeted meetings with the inner village merchants they report that some of these merchants are beginning to get involved, including agreeing to serve on the DRI Planning Committee.

Sleepy Hollow's history is rooted in the arts, with Washington Irving's Legend of Sleepy Hollow. We are home to Hudson Valley Writers' Center and close to Tarrytown Music Hall. We are the rehearsal base for the Hudson Valley Symphonic Wind Ensemble. 3-4 years ago the Village recognized an emerging artist population, many choosing Sleepy Hollow for our racial and economic diversity. Cognizant that art works to improve the lives of Americans in many ways, the Village works to support these artists, using arts to connect the community. Some classes and performances are smaller, but in 2015 with NYSCA and I LoveNY grants, the Village produced Circus Latino, with artists from 6 nations and marketing to bring diverse resident groups together to enjoy and be inspired. All 5 performances sold out. We have applied for a 2017 NEA Our Town grant. The ultimate goal is an arts center.

7) Local Support

When GM closed its plant in 1996, the village lost its largest employer and took a huge hit to its tax revenue, as GM had been responsible for 47-49% of local tax revenue. The Village entered two decades of austerity budget. At first residents were shell-shocked by the decline, but over the last 8 years demand for a downtown revitalization has built exponentially.

The Sleepy Hollow Board of Trustees is fully committed to building and implementing a strategic investment plan and passed the resolution in support of this initiative unanimously. 56 stakeholders and diverse community leaders, desperate for a downtown revitalization, are thrilled to offer their support including:

Residents groups: Philipse Manor Improvement Assoc, Sleepy Hollow Manor Assoc, Ichabods Landing Resident Assoc, SH Senior Citizens, Smith-White Senior Residence (64 units of low income senior housing), North Tarrytown Housing Authority (86 units of public low-income housing) and College Arms (164 privately owned low income apartments)
Houses of worship: St. Teresa's of Avila (1,000 parishioners attend mass every week at this very active inner village church), Rock of Salvation, and Immaculate Conception Church.
The LDC, Sleepy Hollow Ambulance Corps, SH Fire Department, SHEAC and the PBA
Parks: Friends of Rockefeller Preserve, Friends of Horan's Landing and RiverWalk Park.
The Warner Library, Rotary Club, Latino U College Access, YMCA, Open Door Health Clinic, the Kids Club of Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow, Rivertown Runners, the Old Dutch Church, the Historical Society and Historic Hudson Valley.

The Westchester Community Foundation supports the downtown revitalization.

We have the support of the developers of Edge-on-Hudson, and the redeveloper of the burned out properties on Beekman Avenue

The Chamber of Commerce and the Sleepy Hollow Merchants Council. The following Sleepy Hollow businesses asked to be individually: Doyles Irish Pub, Los Andes Chilean Bakery, Bridgeview Tavern, Tarrytown and Sleepy Hollow Farmers Market, Sleepy Hollow Pharmacy, Tompkins Mahopac Bank (the only bank in Sleepy Hollow), a number of realtors, and Phelps Memorial Hospital Center (largest employer in Sleepy Hollow).

The Board of Education supports us as does the Sleepy Hollow High School Student Government, the Foundation of the Public Schools of the Tarrytowns and the PTA.

Arts: Rivertown Artists Workshop, ArtsLatinoNY, Pablo Mayor-Folklore Urbano, the Performing Arts Boosters and the Hudson Valley Symphonic Wind Ensemble.

Sports: Wolfpak football, AYSO soccer and TNT baseball/softball.

We have the support of the Westchester County Department of Planning, Westchester County Tourism & Film, Senator Murphy and Assemblyman Abinanti.

The local lead will be resident Carter Sackman, president of Sackman Holdings, a New York City-based real estate development firm founded by his father 35 years ago. Sackman Holdings' focus is the rehabilitation of historic buildings and incorporating traditional Old World features into new construction. Mr. Sackman played a leading role in the revitalization of Asbury Park which, when he entered, had a ravaged boardwalk and a downtown vacancy rate of 80%. Mr. Sackman's started by attracting renters to live downtown, which included rezoning for upper floor residential. Today the downtown buildings are restored to their Art Deco glory, the boardwalk is teeming with life, and Asbury Park is a desirable destination.

8) Other

The DRI vision is the creation of a downtown destination; a place for people to gather. We visualize converting a downtown street to an outdoor pedestrian mall with - capitalizing on one of our strengths – food establishments offering cuisines from many different nations. A number of attractions to entertain children will be included (fountain? climb-on sculptures?) so that families can linger. Pocket parks and playgrounds will be installed to attract children and their families. Additionally, by working with the developer of the Beekman burned out buildings, we could extend the parking behind the Beekman Ave stores down the entire block, creating many spaces while preserving the pedestrian character of the downtown.

Another focus of our DRI project will be diversifying housing stock. We are fortunate to be anchored by a large inventory of low-income housing and rent-controlled apartments. We also have many large, expensive suburban-style homes and many inexpensive, shabby apartments. We do not have much in the mid-cost range. There are few viable options for up-and-coming professionals. This is of concern as we wish the next generation to have a place to live and be commercially active after they graduate from college or high school. Many of our young adults move away, unable as yet to afford the more expensive houses and reluctant to return to the shabby apartments they may have grown up in. Many have expressed the desire to return if the right housing choices were available. There are also middle class workers (including municipal employees) who desire to live in Sleepy Hollow but live in the northern counties for affordability reasons. Therefore we have an underrepresented middle class.

Run down after decades of neglect the inner village does not attract investment. Property taxes are high. 50% of the properties in our small village are tax exempt, and with a marginal business area we have low assessables on the commercial side, keeping much of the local tax burden on the homeowners. This deters investors. Property owners are reluctant to improve their buildings when this may raise their taxes. The need is for new “first in” investors who will take the risk and make large enough investments to incentivize adjoining property owners. A downtown with inviting businesses to attract customers is also needed. Once we overcome the start-up hurdles, the momentum will build: buildings will increase in value, the burden on current property owners will be relieved, millennials will be encouraged to move in and ongoing reinvestment in private property will flow.