

Village of Canastota - NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #3

Meeting Notes

Date/Time July 31, 2024 / 6-8pm

Place: Storefront space at S Peterboro and Center Streets – 104 Center St

LPC Attendees: **Rosanne Warner**, Village of Canastota Mayor, Co-Chair
Kipp Hicks, Madison County IDA Director, Co-Chair
Amanda Douglass, NBT Bank Manager, Canastota Chamber President
Anthony Palmara, retired engineer
Bill McDade, Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) chairperson
Charlene Barres, Lenox Town Clerk
Colleen Keane, Village Beautification Committee, National Grid
Emily Sorbello, Village Beautification Committee, Owl Wire
Joel Arsenault, Terra Real Estate
Marilyn Higgins, Planning Board chairperson
Sena Clarke, Canastota Housing Authority Board Member

LPC Not in Attendance: **Tracy Cesario**, Employee of the Oneida Indian Nation

State/Consultant Team: **Holly Granat**, New York State (NYS) Department of State (DOS)
Zach Becker, Empire State Development (ESD)
Steve Kearney, Stantec
Phil Schaeffing, Stantec

The Village of Canastota's third NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC) meeting took place on Wednesday, July 31, 2024, at the former Red Onion storefront at the corner of S Peterboro and Center Streets. The meeting's purpose was to review and finalize the revitalization strategies, review highlights from the downtown profile, and share information about the 15 projects submitted for funding consideration during the Open Call for Projects. Steve Kearney and Phil Schaeffing from Stantec, the State's consultant team lead, presented the attached slideshow.

NY Forward Overview and Planning Process Updates

- The Mayor reviewed the LPC Code of Conduct and the role LPC members have in the planning process.
- The consultant team is planning to attend one of the Fall Festival days in September to promote the second public meeting and share information about the NYF planning process.

LPC Discussion

- An LPC member suggested that the vision statement should be more future-focused. Changes were discussed below (~~removed~~ changed):

- Canastota, an Erie Canal community with a rich history and a prime location in Central New York, ~~has a~~ strives to be a welcoming and lively Downtown with popular small businesses, a variety of housing options, and attractive amenities for residents and visitors. The Village of Canastota ~~is creating~~ has created a better community for its residents and businesses by providing opportunities to ensure the ~~continued~~ future growth and prosperity of the village for generations to come.
- An LPC member also suggested more specific references in the goals and strategies:
 - Revitalize Canal Street (in Downtown economy goal)
 - Increase canal- and trail-related tourism (in tourism opportunities goal)
- What data sources are used for the downtown profile?
 - US Census Bureau decennial census and American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates as well as ESRI, a national data provider.

Open Call for Projects Discussion

The consultant team shared a summary of project information submitted during the Open Call. It was emphasized that project details including total project cost, NYF request amount, and project scope are expected to change over the next two months as the consultant team works with project sponsors to further develop and strengthen the potential projects.

- Several LPC members discussed the North Canal Street Enhancements potential project.
 - In several LPC members' opinions, the proposed new park/public space is potentially the most important project on the list. One member said this project would be "transformational."
 - Another noted that it would anchor at least three potential private projects. The consultant team noted that this co-location is an important consideration and that the synergies strengthened all of them.
- Several questions were raised about the Canastota Crossings potential project.
 - Should retail be part of this project concept? If one of the LPC goals is to improve/increase retail opportunities in downtown, then adding retail to Canastota Crossing would seem to contradict the goal.
 - Does the project sponsor have tenants lined up or not? If they do not, then there would be significant risk in that "you don't know what you're going to end up with."
 - The project form does not mention any tenants and the consultant team will follow-up for more information.
 - It was also discussed that the impact from just doing site work to prepare for future tenants does not in itself create any significant positive impact.
 - The consultant team will also discuss the project scope with the sponsor and whether it can be modified to better meet the goals of the NYF program.
- Several LPC members discussed the Boxing Hall of Fame Research Library.
 - While LPC members generally support the project and agreed that it would benefit the community, one concern is that investing in a basement space in the current location would have little visible impact on the NYF area. It was suggested that the consultant team ask whether the project sponsor would consider a downtown location with street presence. It was specifically suggested that Canal Street would be a good location for the library, and the question was raised as to whether 138

Canal Street has a tenant already or not. Further discussion noted the operational issues that could result from staffing and managing two separate locations.

- An LPC member asked if the 3229 Seneca Turnpike potential project had already gone to the Planning Board.
 - Mayor Warner stated that the project sponsor has always wanted to do this project, and mentioned that he would possibly consider including incubator space for entrepreneurs and fledgling businesses.
- LPC members were supportive of the ZEMS/Penny potential project. One LPC member asked if the consultant team could review the project to identify better connectivity opportunities to make it more accessible and a larger attraction for visitors. Signage was mentioned.
- The Branding/Wayfinding potential project should include opportunities along the Empire State Trail. It has a lot of bike traffic during the summer season.
 - The consultant team will review with the sponsor. The project intent seems to include signage along the trail.
- An LPC member noted their opinion that the project sponsor for 138 Canal Street almost certainly has the capacity to complete the project.
- There was a general concern about project costs for some of the private projects—particularly with the Brewery, ZEMS, and 138 Canal Street. LPC members are concerned that those costs seem low for the scope of the project being proposed.
 - The consultant team includes a cost estimator that will review all projects. These projects will be noted for a close look and discussion with the sponsors. The team will also ask whether these projects could potentially expand depending on the sponsors' capacities.
- LPC members discussed the firehouse renovation project. The elevator portion of the project was highlighted as a need for the Village.
 - DOS recommended that the project costs be broken down to better understand all components of the scope. The consultant team, the Village, and DOS will work to refine the scope and determine associated cost estimates before the next LPC meeting.
- An LPC member asked whether the History Station and North Canal Street Enhancement projects could be combined.
 - The consultant team will discuss the possibility with the project sponsor.
- LPC members unanimously agreed to accept late Small Project Interest Letters so that they can have the best picture possible of interested property and business owners.
- There was significant discussion about the Canastota Sports Park potential project.
 - Some LPC members advocated for it while others expressed opposition to it as a NYF project candidate. One LPC member spoke of the need for more recreation options in the village. Another suggested that the project does not align with the goals that the LPC members had agreed to.
 - One suggestion that generally had consensus was to consider starting with a smaller project focused near the existing pedestrian trail connection to the location.
 - The Sports Park potential project will require an LPC vote whether to modify the NYF area boundary to continue considering it for funding. DOS representative Holly Granat recommended that this vote be tabled until the project scope and cost can be further refined with the project sponsor before the next meeting.

Upcoming Dates

The second public meeting (9/19) and LPC meeting #4 (9/18) will be in mid-September. The public meeting will present the latest information on the projects being considered for NYF funding for the public to review and comment on.

The last two LPC meetings will be in mid- and late-October. At the final meeting on 10/29, the LPC will vote to recommend a slate of projects to the State for NYF funding. The slate of projects should total \$6-8 million in requested NYF funding for the State to choose from and award the \$4.5 million that Canastota received.

Public Comment

There was a public comment period at the end of the LPC meeting and a comment card was available for written comments. No comments were provided.

The meeting adjourned at 8:00pm.

Please send questions, comments or corrections regarding the meeting notes to Phil Schaeffing, project manager for the State's consultant team ([philip.schaeffing\(at\)stantec.com](mailto:philip.schaeffing@stantec.com)).

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.