Village of Hastings on Hudson
Waterfront Rezoning Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: November 1, 2018
Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm
Location: Hastings Public Library - Orr Room

Members Present: Kate Starr, Richard Bass, Tom Asher, Katey Stechel, Morgen Fleisig, Danielle Galland, Shannon Rooney

Minutes Prepared by: Tom Asher

Hunter College Studio (Kate and Richard)
- Case was flawed and we asked them to reassess the exercise
- Presumed no change over time – a significant concern if students were to propose projects for the site

Pol.is (Tom)
- Given the size of our cities but even the size of our villages we have a pronounced problem. It's no longer easy to convene a significant proportion of a community to gauge the will of the people.
- A virtual tool for civic engagement
- a digital tool intended to help accurately map areas of consensus and areas of disagreement; it scales up ability of government to listen to citizens and not just the louded voices on an issue.
- this tool has been used to not only arrive at consensus (the Tainwanese democracy movement used it to crowdsource a charter on which everyone could vote); it also has been used to demonstrate consensus (Bowling Green, Kentucky)
- three steps: a proposition – vote yes, no, or skip. This allows you to see which topics command the most agreement or where the village is most split
- And anyone can add propositions – we need more affordable housing; we need to ensure that 30% of all units meet affordable housing requirements; we need basketball courts; we need a
    - this latter step allows the tool to combine analytics previously restricted to rich qualitative research methods with rigorous quantitative data collection
        - you can get a series of value statements that normally you might obtain only in a longform interview or a panel interview; and SIMULTANEOUSLY poll community sentiment on each proposition – all in a single tool, which is incredibly valuable
    - Some concerns: we might find that the great majority dislike that which we are embarked on
    - Things we regarded as nonstarters might command majority support

- ○ Anonymity encourages use but also allows abuse

Other outreach fora related to strategic plan:
- Food town
- Train stations
- Library

Daniel Messplay – Assistant Director, Department of Planning and Economic Development, Village of Port Chester
- Discussed form based zoning code used throughout the entire village
- Port Chester waterfront is different regarding ownership, number of parcels, density (equivalent to Boston or Chicago), urbanity of site
- Zoning is a piece of it but there is considerable added effort to make a vital commercial zone that provides new economic opportunity
    - ○ 13% of households below the poverty line; 41 percent of median household income below that of neighboring villages/towns; "majority minority" community
    - ○ Two minute walk will take you from mainstreet to waterfront and through downtown (compact)
    - ○ Heavy industrial use of waterfront
- Some parts of the waterfront are publicly owned (DPW based there; a small waterfront park based here)
- Able to creatively adapt industrial buildings for new purpose (housing, business)
- Village condemned property and transferred ownership to private developer before there was a central planning department; developer promised community assets and instead put in big box development. Permitted by bad zoning and if zoning is permitting bad design the zoning needed to be rethought
- Studied land-use regulations – Conventional, which focuses on use; form-based which prioritizes urban design, density and use, management – prioritizes not use but rather the urban fabric and texture
    - ○ Decided to focus on form-based code
    - ○ Cost is wildly variant to develop a code from Beacon at $23,000 to Miami at $2.2 million; village determined it would cost 600k to replace existing code and undertake GEIS (code part cost $200k)
        - ■ How to fund? Portchester bonded this expense and issued a serial bond for that item – 15 year bond roughly
    - ○ Developed RFP that emphasized the following elements
        - ■ Community-driven process
        - ■ Bilingual capability
        - ■ Well-rounded team
            - Architects
            - Planning
            - Urban designers
            - Engineers

- - - Attorneys
    - Real estate market advisors
  - Brought on a firm called urban advisors to undertake a finance assessments
  - Put the RFP on urban land institute; macgraw hill site;
    - Town Planning and Urban Design Collaborative won the bid and teamed up with others including transportation consultants; Fisher Associates; Seqra; City Explained
  - Community driven process began with consultants
  - Branded it as "Plan the Port".
    - A week-long charrette process
    - Took over empty downtown storefront – planapalooza
    - Swing by and chat with people outside, in farmer's market
    - This was first real public engagement on the waterfront planning/zoning
  - The team did intensive consultations, presentations where they reflected back what they heard, and then embarked on the planning/zoning process
  - Did not set metrics for engagement; sought comprehensive survey instead
  - Found a real middle ground around opinions – sharing visioning proved to be quite popular
    - More green space
    - Smarter parking design
    - Bridge to facilitate passage across traintracks
  - How do you go from vision to code/land regulations
    - Ensure that buildings face any streets they are adjacent
    - Rather than turn back or shoulder to the street
    - Put doors every 20 feet;
    - Unobstructed access to waterfront by limiting building length
    - Structured parking must be lined by buildings with other uses so that you aren't focused on parking structures (also created other incentives such as providing train vouchers; bike parking, etc)
  - How do you get revenue if you are form-based? If you aren't dictating use you can't push developers in one direction or another when it comes to use
  - How do you account for sea level rise? Set backs, more parkland
  - First draft of the code now published
- Learning from process
  - Know where you want to end up when you begin
  - Importance of a community-driven process
  - Ensure that what you are zoning for will result in the type of a place you are trying to create

- - - Don't need density to benefit from form-based code
    - Can find the plan and other materials at https://www.plantheport.com (zone for waterfront is CD5WF)
- Focused on massing, scale, landscape, fenestration, screening
- Question: did you put green designations in your masterplan such as solar?
    - Kept it out of zoning; could have put green building technology in code but did not as it might change the texture of the community if we required this step
- Question: Developer in new Rochelle came up with visioning, did you consider
    - No; we didn't want to create perception that developer led process
    - We also didn't want the possibility of two competing codes emerging
    - And last our consultants told us not to try to entice developers, just require it – don't dangle incentives of exchanges for your wish list
- Question: any prompts for use categories
    - Yes, but broad that might encapsulate co-working spaces and cabinet manufacturer – we would do ourselves a disservice by trying to capture precise uses
    - Shortened use tables

Discussion of October 11, Public presentation (Kate)
- Need to include landscape architect in required expertise in RFP
- Goal to draft RFP issued in January with kickoff in March
- Review RFPs on the sharedrive; ask Daniel Messplay for their RFP

Questions
- Who are you looking to hire through the RFP
    - We need a constellation of expertise to help us arrive at a code
- Don't forget we own roads, southside , Rowley Trail
- We need 300 more parking spaces
    - Response: we will do scenario plan
- Will you issue the RFP for public comment?
    - In January we will issue