

Village of Hastings on Hudson

Waterfront Rezoning Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: August 9, 2018

Time: 7:30 - 9:30 pm

Location: Hastings Public Library - Orr Room

Members Present: Meg Walker, Shannon Rooney, Morgen Fleisig, Danielle Galland, Thomas Asher, Richard Bass, Spencer Orkus

Minutes Prepared by: Sandra Nam Cioffi

Meeting called to order at 7:32 pm

Chair's Welcome & Updates (Richard Bass on behalf of Kate Starr)

- Introduction of WRC members and the public members present: Mike Glickstein, Marilyn Campbell, Pam Nell, Chief Gunther from Fire Department, Liz Perry. Later arrivals: Vanessa Merton, Steven Siebert, Edward Baldwin. Additional members of the public arrived during the meeting.
- Committee Member Updates
 - Public Comment during meetings - beginning vs. end
 - Richard is choosing to have it at the end of the meeting, discussion about this can be had at another time
- Fall monthly meetings - possible schedule change (Sept-December)
 - 2nd Wed September 12 (KS, RB n/a) vs. Thurs Sept 13
 - 2nd Wed October 10 vs. Thurs October 11
 - 2nd Wed November 14. vs Thurs November 8
 - 2nd Wed December 12. vs Thurs December 13
 - Group is ok to move to Wednesday nights for next 4 months - Richard will be in Orlando in September
- Hunter College Studio & HOH High School Student Club
 - Thursday August 30th - first class visit by Kate and Sandra 5:30pm; estimated 10 students enrolled
 - Student site visit Saturday Sept 8th @ 9am (Richard, Kate, Sandra) - committee members are welcome to attend; students will be charged is to look at the village over the next 100+ years including the waterfront and village

Pace Land Use Workshops (Jessica Bacher, PACE)

- Recap of July 17th workshop
 - Kate presented on what the committee is doing as a group; Pace talked to the group about the authority to rezone

- The session was much more of a delivery of information (to the audience), rather than gathering information, and describing the WRC's authority of options to rezone and the tools available to the WRC to rezone
- Good attendance from all representatives; turnout was excellent
- We were not able to get into the strategic planning part of it; it was more educational in nature and questions arose about the process and rezoning in general; the comprehensive planning committee was there to help deliver information about their past work
- Richard - it was a good meeting, many good questions and clarifications in terms of our rights
- Tom - Was there any expression of preferences in forms of zoning?
 - Response: No this was not discussed; it was open for the audience to discuss, but there was not a particular conversation; the stakeholders wanted to state their general priorities and take it upon themselves to say where they are coming from as a body/committee
- Letter from Edward Baldwin
 - Morgen - he (Ed) raised many issues we've been talking about with the WRC; previous committees, with the exception of the CPC had very restricted mandates to look only at specific aspects of the site, but we need an overall planning approach that includes adjacent properties, site access, infrastructure, and view corridors; nothing in the letter was controversial, but he did have a strong opinion about where tall buildings should go and this is further restricted by the Consent Decree. It was a great letter and very useful.
 - Richard - We've received several similar letters, a simple thank you might feel insufficient, but are more responses necessary?
 - Meg - Perhaps when we start the community engagement process in earnest, we should have a way of collecting or tabulating letters; we can let him know now that this is something we are doing and will continue to do
 - Create a Matrix - add stars to issues discussed and addressed
 - Info from Ed's letter can be collected and placed into appropriate steps
- Agenda for September 5th workshop @ 6:30-9pm (6:30 refreshments)
 - We are going to switch the format so there is more opportunity to provide input, therefore the agenda is designed in such a way to do so
 - Target Area Map - defining the area - although we are rezoning the waterfront, be specific about the impacts of other areas
 - Goals and outline of the strategic plan for planning and zoning
 - be specific about this plan and strategy
 - Kate will start to present this information to the group, then we can allow time for feedback
 - 4 Topics for individuals to attend in two sessions
 - Make sure people can agree upon goals
 - These topics have been used in other community sessions and have been reviewed/edited

- Individuals pick 1 of the 2 topics per session:
 - Session I: (choose Economy or Natural Environment, Open Space, Community, Culture & Education)
 - Session II (choose Infrastructure or Future Land Uses & Built Environment)
- Report back to hear a summary of the topics after the 2 sessions
- Last presentation/workshop can be broad and educational in nature for the public; this can be restructured either during the Sept 5th session or by the WRC - it is on the workshop agenda to decide what this is and further defined/shaped
- Invitation - who will be attending: same participants as July 17th with any additional that were not available
 - Morgen thought the first session was for govt officials and committees, and the second would be opened up to local businesses and others?
 - Jessica's response: we can (open it up), but based on the core group, do we need to broaden this information based on who needs to be brought in?
 - Tom - we might want the businesses to talk about the downtown economy
 - Barbara Prisament was at the first workshop, but if there is a next layer of people to come in, it would be positive if there is a way to do this without derailing the purpose of the meeting.
 - Jessica asks: who is still missing at this stage? How do we select people to do this?
 - Danielle - asks about Metro North? When do these broader stakeholders get folded in?
 - Meg responds: when a consultant comes on board, her thoughts are that the key stakeholders such as Metro North and Riverkeeper get brought in during the planning process
 - Tom adds: institutions have certain information, so we may miss out on important swaths of information if we don't include them
 - Jessica asks: **It is important to ask ourselves, which people have information that help define the planning process.**
 - Meg - When we are writing the RFP, which people/groups do we want the consultant to take into account (such as infrastructure/Metro North)? Early in the process, we can state this; this strategy will help us take the next step, write the RFP, engage the developer, and see what land use tools are out there to make a decision; maybe these groups can weigh in later, or maybe we interview them later to discuss the planning process and what things we want to take into account
 - The other groups are important for a later date; we're not eliminating anyone from the process
 - About 30 people came to the July 17th session; for the next session, we'd be ok if we increased to 40 people or so.

- Jessica: the October final presentation was originally designed to be smaller in focus, however, this can become a bigger event, at a larger space, and marketed beforehand with the purpose to present the final strategic plan and inform the public.
- If anyone has any comment to the Agenda, please edit and send back to Sandra/Jessica
- During the two sessions, committee members should distribute amongst the sessions equally and be able to report back
- List of Zoning Options; Response
 - Quals could be different if one were to head in a specific direction; alternatively a general firm can be efficient
 - In an upcoming session, we as a committee should discuss the types/options
- Budget for Consultants
 - In one of the calls with the Mayor we spoke about a EIS, but is anyone talking about what funding is available and how to price and fund this?
 - There was no further conversation since that call.
 - We could have a nice RFP, but ultimately need a budget. Whether it is the Mayor or WRC to have conversations, it would be in the best interest of the owners to have a budget/process.
 - When the Mayor was here last (at a committee meeting), it was discussed that BP is in the process of choosing a developer to buy the property - therefore, who is the go to funder? This should be decided between BP and the developer; Richard is uncomfortable frontloading the expense; the funding should be evergreen.
 - What are the typical costs? Jessica has seen \$450K for a similar RFP study done in Connecticut, and they did not have to do an EIS.
 - Depending on how we proceed, there needs to be funds for the planning process and another fund for the EIS, because the EIS can run anywhere from half a million to a million dollars.
 - Strategy for solving this - Richard will reach out to Kate to see if she wants to converse with the Mayor in the next few days to see where we are regarding budget
 - Defining the area and how this fits in the comprehensive plan should also be discussed
 - Zoning will be isolated, but studies will not
 - This work will help inform the comp plan
- Final presentation in October - how can we achieve bringing about an educational component at the end of this public presentation? (Discussed above)
 - Meg - WRC will meet with Pace before the meeting in Oct to review what they are suggesting
 - Ideally for the Sept meeting we flesh this out, then with WRC further define - a lot of work needs to happen between now and Sept 5th

Define the area of study - printed base map

- Define the study area for RFP and planning
 - Harvest owns parking lot
 - MacEachron park - owned by the village
 - Parking lot by bridge - owned by the village and goes up to the bridge
 - South side - DPW, Dosin's Towing
 - Good argument for why to consider the parking lot
 - Keep the parking, and redevelop and collect revenue
- What is the Planning area vs. Area to be Rezoned (mark the area we have been charged with rezoning)
 - The committee reviewed a base map and starting outlining areas of concern and for discussion; Sandra will gather more base information and begin a diagram to begin graphically outlining the agreed upon study area or areas for further negotiation

unConference Planning and Discussion (Morgen)

- unConference Subcommittee Coordination Meeting 7/30
 - Morgen describes to the public:
 - the idea of an unConference is about reaching out to the entire community and bringing the community into this entire effort, but what we realized was we could be doing things at a smaller scale on our own
 - The unConference was an idea Katey came up with to have a conference that is reframed - less about panel/presenters
 - The result of the sub-committee's meeting was that it felt like we were conflicting with the work being done by Pace
 - The unConference should involve a number of experts we want the consultants to bring to the table - maybe this can be a larger component of the plan (with Pace)
 - What can we do in the meantime?
 - Some thoughts are to bring in experts earlier and do presentations at monthly meetings; organize committee meetings around one topic and bring in an expert and publicize them as special; this is what led to bringing the Q&A of our meetings to the front of the meeting; the real issue is we want an educational component at Oct 11th meeting
 - Farmer's markets - appear more regularly there
 - The result is we need to dig into the zoning options
 - Jessica - These engagement meetings are good for providing feedback and they help people begin to engage with the committee and this process
 - The public can talk about how they want to engage, rather than the substance of the process

Public Comment (Richard Bass)

- Steven Siebert (Hamilton Avenue) - references Jane Jacobs' *Death and Life of American Cities* and Robert Moses - wishes he heard more about Jane Jacobs in what he's hearing (at these meetings); Jane Jacobs said there are not experts, the experts are you; why do we accept the foundational premise of outsiders? We need our village to pave the future in their own hands; Richard Baldwin said - urban renewal is negro removal, though we are not dealing with this here, development seems to be perpetuating class and race in this community we need a more diverse community; can we ask of the developers if we can rezone for light industrial or commercial? What right do we have to refuse to rezone? We need more for this community, far more than the development; he was aghast by the rendering of the developer (Argent); What kind of rights do we have not to re-zone?

Meeting adjourns at 9:12pm