

November 12, 2010

Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission

Proceedings by Authority

State of New York,
City of Jamestown ss.:
Mayor's Conference Room

The regular meeting of the Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Friday, November 12, 2010 at 8:00 a.m.

Members Present: Co-Chairman Jennifer Harkness, Co-Chairman Greg Rabb, Len Faulk, Linda Swanson, Steve Kulig, Larry Senn, Mike Sullivan

Others Present: Lee Harkness, Jason Stronz, Joelle Conti-Washer

Co-Chair Harkness called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of the October 2010 meeting were approved.

NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION PLAN PRESENTATION

- The status of the Plan adoption is at the Planning Commission.
- They meet next Tuesday, the 16th and the hope is that they will be voting to adopt the plan.
- It would then go on to the Housing Committee and then to City Council for approval.
- If they pass it then it's in the Housing Committee's hands. It appears that they're ready to move it forward and then on to the Council.
- The bulk of the work is being done by the Planning Commission. The Housing Committee and most of the Council have kept up on what they're doing so that shouldn't be a problem.
- Is it going through with changes, or it's just going through the process.
- It'll be the Jamestown Neighborhood Plan.
- Is the original Plan that was put out is what's moving forward?
- The report from czb is the heart of the Plan. Additions have been proposed.
- It's a wrap around document that the Planning Commission put together. It highlights some of the things in the Plan that need more focus and things that may need a little less focus.
- That's what's taking the time at the Planning Commission level. In crafting that document so that it meets everyone's needs. Once it is finalized it will move forward.
- Is the SEQR question all set?
- The SEQR has been completed and Bill Rice has gotten through the first part of it. The Planning Commission now has to vote on the SEQR.
- That's separate from adopting the Plan.

Community Forums

- The second community forum was held this past Tuesday night at Washington Middle School. About 70-75 people were in attendance.
- Two or three new people come up to Jason to express interest. Having a couple of new people come and show interest and say that they want to be involved and exchange names and numbers, to keep in contact was healthy.
- The panel was great. It's always fun to hear people talk about their neighborhoods. Kristin Lee-Yaw was involved and did a great presentation. She looked at the Plan and she really got into it. The more you really can dig into it, the more you see how relevant it is to my house, my block, my neighborhood.
- It raised quite a awareness for Kristin too. The Friday before the forum, came to the JRC office and picked up 100 flyers. She didn't get off of Prendergast Ave. before she had run out of flyers. She was hoping that some more of those people that she had distributed them to would show up, but it was at least people interested who are aware of what's going on. Maybe they can come to another event. She found walking down Prendergast that even though she lives on Lakeview, she never knew what was happening on Prendergast Ave. She assumed that parts of Prendergast were the same as the parts of Lakeview. She saw a lot of improvements happening down there and was impressed with how many people are actually out doing work. The people were intrigued by what was going to happen or what was going to come from this Plan. Some of these followers are just waiting for the big movement. More people will come in once we get to that stage.
- Can we partner with the PTA's? Can the school system themselves be a sponsor? It's as important to them as it is to all of us. Can we get the Superintendent on down to be involved. They could stimulate more people to come out and that's what we need.
- Ultimately that is what we'll want to do. The first forum in the middle school level was a trial run to see how it was going to work. Once we get to the Persell and Jefferson forums, we'll be able to pick up some different sponsors. Jamestown Public Schools and business sponsors where instead of Home Depot gift cards, maybe it's Home Depot being a sponsor, maybe it's some of the local hardware stores and different entities that might be invested in the Plan as we move forward. Maybe they want to take on a greater role. We can get them in place and that's really going to be one of the primary focuses of the neighborhood coordinator. We won't have another forum in the same model. We won't have another forum for another two and a half months. We anticipate to have a neighborhood coordinator in place to organize that next forum.
- It was hard to be able to hear. The microphone was up there but it didn't actually do anything.
- That microphone was WRFA's not the schools. There were no microphones and the sound system wasn't on and we didn't have computer access. There was a teacher in the audience who ran home to first grab her Mac laptop and second to grab a piece that connects to the actual AB equipment so we could show the power point and the video.
- We need to have a little bit better collaboration. We want to make sure that we have everything that we paid for in moving forward.
- The other piece was the publicity - doing more with publicity. Getting the schools more involved.
- The flyers went out the day before.

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- They had the flyers a week and a half in advance. A lot of teachers from the middle school were at training in Baltimore the week before the forum so administration at Washington School didn't feel like they should give them out to substitutes to distribute to the kids. They waited until their teachers were back was the Monday before. We need to make sure that there's a little bit better focus on those things. It's not easy to put all those flyers together and then to find out that they didn't go home.
- The Next-Gen group will go door-to-door in the neighborhood that we're targeting to hand out flyers.
- With the Post-Journal we can work together too to get instead of one big article right before, maybe a series of smaller pieces that really advertise the event leading into the following week.
- When you're handing out flyers, it's time consuming. People will engage you in conversation and it takes a lot longer. Hearing that she only got up Prendergast, is not a surprise to me so that. It can take 15 minutes a household sometimes. It's really slow.
- We can partner with the Ward Council person as well.
- Everything is sent out in advance to the Council people with the flyer.
- Mr. Rabb stated he would have no problem asking council members to hand them out.
- When the new person comes on board what will be his/her role? One of the most meaningful things done as part of this process was the walking tour. That's an eye opener. If you can get people on that walking tour to actually go house by house, street by street, with somebody with expertise can show the neighbors what's going on. If that involves a council member that is fine. If this is going to be the focal person we want to introduce this person to neighborhoods, those walking tours are powerful – very powerful.
- We garnered quite a bit of response from that first walking tour and I think it really propelled us to that first forum.
- Most people don't notice what's happening in our neighborhoods because they're parking their car and walking into their homes. They're not seeing what's happening a block or even five houses away sometimes.
- If there are those things that you roll out a plan over the next year, this is the beginning of those community forums. It leads to the block party. It leads to all those kinds of things.
- You really have to do it late spring, summer, early fall. The coordinator would have time to think about how you would attack the quadrants in the City and how you would schedule and get people out there moving.
- After the tour, you are more aware of bad steps, bad garage doors, drive-ways, those are the visual things that if you can spruce up the face, like downtown, everything looks a whole lot better.
- The neighborhood coordinator position was posted in the Post-Journal and the Buffalo News on November 7th. A dozen responses have been received and Chautauqua Word is running a small advertisement. It will also be sent to the U.B. Planning School and some of the other local colleges just to see what kind of response we may get from some of them.
- Will it hit the internet then?
- Yes. Through the Post-Journal it automatically goes to their website. For the Buffalo News, they are linked with Hot Jobs. We will be reviewing applications starting November 29th. The posting will run again on November 21st in the Post-Journal and the Buffalo News. We'll start reviewing applications on November 29th, and we'll probably have an aggressive interviewing process with again, the anticipation of having someone in place shortly after the New Year.
- If anyone wants to obtain a copy of the job description, it's all available on the JRC website.

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- May funders should be thanked for funding the position. This position is really targeted for a two year funding cycle. We've had a great response so there's still some fundraising to be done.
- Len Faulk has been appointed to the JRC board. It's a liaison between the neighborhood groups and the JRC Board. He's going to be directly involved with our new person.
- It's a continuation of our task force that's been kind of on hold now until we get these things established. Neighborhood task force meetings are still held and then there'll be direct input into the JRC Board meetings on neighborhood issues. It's a nice fit and it fits well with the Urban Design Plan process.

HEALTH CARE ECONOMIC IMPACT

- A guest speaker, Ann Monroe, who's President of the Western New York - Community Health Foundation Central and Western New York. She took a look at Jamestown and pulled out some statistics about our community's health, gave us an overview of what's happening in her region. They are the healthcare conversion foundation and they're now the second largest foundation in upstate New York with \$100,000,000 of assets. They came about from the Univera settlement - that's where the money came from. They fund healthcare initiatives in the most eight western counties. If you take Buffalo and go straight down, then there's a gap, and then you go over to Syracuse and down. So they don't do Rochester. They have funded initiatives here and will continue to. She gave us some good tips of what's going on in other communities, people to talk to and I think that'll be our next steps. How they're dealing with their physician shortage, how they're recruiting. The group is now freely sharing information, struggling for "what is that next step?" Not having a lot of luck bringing in physicians to the private practice, the Hospital's been aggressively hiring their own employees. It's very expensive.
- The foundation representatives were unable to meet. We were clearly trying to figure out how the foundations could play here.
- It is such a big issue.
- The good news is that the Hospital and Dr. Burt Rappole is working as the educational coordinator in setting up some residency rotations and will be beefing up the summer internship program. Housing needs are a concern so the Foundations may look at that first.
- That will be the first immediate need. It has to be the right kind of housing. It has to be a stable place. It has to accommodate both male and female and hopefully within walking distance of the Hospital.
- A joint recruiter was also discussed.
- The next meeting, a former recruiter for ECMC is coming down to see what his whole thing is about. It's not about money. It's a lot bigger issue than money. We need to have an overall plan. We have to look at it more strategically than just trying to put out fires. Trying to hire a doctor, there is a lot that goes into that. We need to take a step back.
- We've scratched the surface of a lot of different things - still searching for what that strategic thing would be. We don't have the money to throw at it. If each physician wants \$150 - 200,000 incentive. We can't pull together a million dollar war chest here. It's going to have to be strategic.
- They don't stay necessarily just because you're paying them just to come to this community as soon as their two year commitment is up.
- The money is not going to solve the problem - so what is it?

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- Grow Your Own is probably the long term solution but it's a really long term before it pays back. We're now at that place where we really have to think hard of what the strategy's going to be.
- Did the Community Foundation offer help?
- She's willing to help us though think through the Strategic Planning. They have such a more regional perspective and it's us. All of upstate New York shares the same issues, but they have assets to be able to connect us maybe to the kind of people that would help us think this through.
- How to use her effectively is the next step.
- One approach that they've used in other areas, if we had a strategic plan it would work, is they find that R.N. that wants to go to the next level. We've already got somebody who's committed - a community member - and then pay for the education and help her get to the next level.
- How do we grow our own paraprofessionals - people that are here but may not be all that free to leave their families for two years? How do we make that happen - through distance learning? What resources do we do to train people in place to move them up to the next level that would fill some needed gaps here?
- It isn't just about the physician, but growing our paraprofessionals - physician's assistant, therapists that we need that would help gap our primary care needs.

URBAN DESIGN PLAN UPDATE

- The projects for 2010 are wrapping up. Renaissance Square, the 2nd phase which were crosswalk enhancements and the terrace area in front of BWB - that project is complete. Two façade restorations that are near completion. MoJo's is getting there and hopefully by the end of next week, weather permitting - everything will be done. The sidewalk at Mason's Fine Arts is the final project that has to actually get under way. The Winter Garden site needs to be spruced up a little bit for the winter months. Six spruce trees were put in there. Signage will be going up next week. The sign board's already in there and some other trees are behind it. Mums are also being planted. Tulip bulbs have also been put in. Fencing was put up to detract people from going too far back. The back portion of the lot was graded so that there is some access. The sidewalks are both complete. Jody Peterson's building the former Empire State Power Net Global Building sidewalk is done now. All the air conditioning units are off. He did a two tone paint color. His hope is that he can have the windows in at the basement level. He was planning to get that done this year. Funders will be contacting us regarding funding for next year to see what projects can be completed in 2011.
- The JRC's working with DJDC for a potential party on December 14th in the front lobby of the Renaissance Center. Details are being hashed out. It'll be incorporated with the opening ceremonies - the Olympic Village. We really want to highlight some of the initiatives that the JRC completed and some of the projects that DJDC completed this year. We want to invite all of the public to come out and not only see that front space, but also start to think about what's going to be happening at the ice arena.
- It's an open house at the Renaissance Center idea?

JAMESTOWN'S NEXT GEN TASK FORCE

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- Multiple people have sent contact names. Meetings have taken place with a few people who have moved back into the area. At the neighborhood forum names were received from a couple of new members.
- One is from Buffalo, but his parents live here and he's looking to move back. A holiday party is being planned before the holidays and the group is just helping out with the neighborhood forums.

ECONOMIC SUMMIT

- We had met last year about an economic summit. We had tried to do some benchmarks and maybe we need to take a look at that again. We probably should review that again in January. The neighborhood plan is doing what we had hoped. It's coming to fruition and that's taken so much of people's time. This group's tried to keep a lot of different balls in the air because it takes so long for things to mature so it's always good to start on the next one that might take four or five years. Is it healthcare? We've spent a lot of time on that. It is the largest employer in town. Is this a place for strategic planning or not? The City can always help if it's infrastructure. Do we just have to finesse this now? Maybe that neighborhood needs to rise to the top. We've concentrated on the north side, but maybe this group needs to work with a coordinator on that neighborhood. You can only convene people so long with that task force.
- That came out of our Job Creation Group. It was charged with trying to address Job Creation. The medical industry rose right to the top.
- Now we really have to identify some of those low hanging fruit type projects like that that would be a win-win-win on a number of our bench marks. It would be good to spend some time maybe in January thinking about that.
- As the marketing plan for the City starts to unfold, the branding, development of the tourism industry within Jamestown is going to be part of that and you've got to promote that. Tourism in the County is going to be a growth area. The economic development piece of in Jamestown is to expand those opportunities, finding businesses that are going to support it.
- If you go back five years and review the bench marks we looked at then, if those bench marks have moved – it is a part of the review you're thinking about in January.
- If there are more jobs now than there were before and it can identified, have the tax values gone up? That would help drive some of the economic development which is where this all started. There are different pieces....better neighborhoods, downtown plan, that's the genesis of it and coming back to that may spin off the next initiatives too.
- The goal of this group is to have that long horizon focus, be patient as it takes 10 years to get something from the first idea.
- The City services were a big part of that and there's obviously been consolidation and there are different things on the table now from what there was five years ago – it's reviewing that progress and saying "what's next?"
- In the January session, can we have the Council involved too?
- Mr. Rabb stated yes.
- A brief review can be conducted, not a big strategic planning session.
- We need to celebrate the successes – that's part of getting people back together again.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

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James N. Olson
Director of Financial Services/City Clerk