

March 13, 2001

Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission ---- Proceedings by Authority

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

A meeting of the Strategic Planning & Partnerships Commission of the City of Jamestown, New York was held on Tuesday, March 13, 2001, at 7:45 a.m.

Members Present: Co-Chair Lillian V. Ney, Co-Chair Lyons, Vince Joy, Jr., Carolyn Seymour, Greg DeCinque, Betsy Wright

Members Absent: Matthew Dimas, Brent Sheldon, Walter Haase, Jeffrey Aiken, Ray Fashano, Miles Lasser, Cindy Peterson

Others Present: Mayor Samuel Teresi, City Clerk Shirley A. Sanfilippo, Councilman McElrath, William Rice, Jennifer Harkness

Co-Chair Ney called the meeting to order. She stated that from now on all meetings will be scheduled for 8:00 a.m. Co-Chair Ney suggested that since the Mayor was present that they start the meeting with old business.

Mayor Teresi said that he went through the list of names given to him for the Jamestown Guarantee. He has no problems with any of those on the list. He wondered if all those people on the list had been contacted regarding their interest and is there a preconceived notion on the part of the group regarding how many people it should be limited to.

Co-Chairs Lyons and Ney stated that the people on the list had not been called and regarding limitations, they would like the widest representation as possible.

Co-Chair Lyons said that he thought it was very important to have representation from the Council, the Mayor or one of his administrators. He stated that there is a need to have the administration and Council involved.

Mayor Teresi asked the Commission members after they come up with a final list, to each contact a couple of these people, before they are seated on this task force. He would like to know if these people will be interested and would like Council to report back to him. That would help him to finalize the list.

Mr. Joy suggested that a representative of small local business be included.

Co-Chair Ney asked Mrs.Harkness if she could work on coming up with someone who is a good representative for small businesses. She then asked Mrs.Harkness to give a brief report regarding her visit with Norman Mintz's visit.

Mrs.Harkness said that he stressed getting the community involved, even more than they had. She said he talked about tourism and the community. He concurred that an urban plan was needed. Mr. Mintz felt that whatever was developed should involve the local people and make them be a part of it.

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Mr. Rice said that he felt differently. To nurture businesses that are already here, there are two problems that you have to deal with. The first being you don't have a lot of the disposable income by statistics. You can't sustain a lot of the businesses. You need the money coming in. The other problem being, there is a lot of square footage downtown that is not being utilized, but there are code compliance issues. To justify the money going into rehabing those facilities, there better be a good reason to do so. With economic conditions now, we don't have that.

Mrs.Harkness also spoke with regards to museum developments and the application for federal funding that was being made.

Mayor Teresi talked about the priority projects, the Lucy-Desi Museum.

Dr. DeCinque wondered what would fifteen million dollars do.

Mrs.Harkness said it would take care of Lucy-Desi, the Wintergarden Theater, the train station, the restoration of the Fenton Mansion, Chadakoin Building and First Street development.

Mayor Teresi stated that the Chadakoin Building is at the last step of approval for HUD to actually allow the Jamestown Housing Authority in the building. The limited liability corporation has been set up to take title receive the funding and to do the actual renovation. They then will turn the finished property over to The Jamestown Housing Authority, which will then operate the units of housing up above and lease the two lower units to the YWCA. That is now before the Department of Housing and Urban Development to determine whether they want their housing authority in the City of Jamestown to be able to accept the asset, operate the asset, close down some of the units at Hotel Jamestown and transfer them to the Chadakoin Building.

The Mayor then talked about his phone conversation with Mr. Mintz regarding the Main Street approach. The approach is a four-step approach, organization, good design, good promotion and activities, and economic restructuring. He stated that a major reason that the development of Jamestown has been held back is, that sometimes the right properties are not held in the right hands.

Dr. DeCinque talked about core properties.

Mayor Teresi said the key is to nurture and back private owners.

Co-Chairs Ney and Lyons went over what had happened in past meetings regarding the vision statement.

Co-Chair Lyons went over the definitions of the words being different to different people. He wondered what the best way of dealing with this dilemma would be.

Mr. Rice stated that there is a question of who is going to define the words. He wondered who is going to be involved in the defining of the words. He stated that the key is to making it a community complete definition.

Ms. Wright wondered if it was okay that the words meant different things to different people. She felt that it had to mean different things to different people.

Mr. Joy was under the impression that the committee wanted something broad as their vision statement.

Dr. DeCinque stated that the real question is how you test sustainability. He thought that the vision statement gave everyone a place to go. He felt most people want to connect. He would like to see some kind of glossary approach in defining these definitions.

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Co-Chair Lyons said it's easy to get tied up in all this stuff. He wondered if common sense wasn't enough.

Dr. DeCinque says that people view things differently. He feels that there must be a solid foundation. Common sense is not enough.

Mayor Teresi said that this vision statement is comparable to the Comprehensive Plan that they went through.

Dr. DeCinque said that it needs to be hammered and never give up.

Mr. Joy thought that the more specific you get the more understandable it will be.

Dr. DeCinque stated that whatever is included in that definition better be meant and that it should be ready to be acted upon.

Mr. Rice believes that the key is to try and balance the community versus the individual's personal interest. He feels that they still need to go to a large group of people to find out what their definition is.

Co-Chair Ney questioned how to get to that point from here.

Mr. Rice recommended that they go through a process to get validation.

Councilman McElrath thought that people might be more interested, or not as reluctant, if something was done through the media or mail, then to attend a council meeting. Then there is the opportunity of expressing yourself.

Ms. Seymour wondered what would be another alternative.

Mayor Teresi said that he finds it painful because he has been through it so many times. He suggested that this may be the reason people are not interested.

Co-Chair Ney said that there is a fair amount of things happening and it would be good to accelerate the process and get some definition and structure for all those things to happen.

Mayor Teresi says that the public does not get "juiced" up until they see the steel starts rising and the ribbon cutting ceremony. The public is the doubting Thomases. The public needs to have a reason for their participation.

Co-Chair Ney suggested that there be a structured workshop, with the media. It needs to be done before the committee moves on.

Dr. DeCinque then discussed the focus of the group.

Mayor Teresi thought that as much energy that is put into getting the public involved, he thinks that you won't get the wide scale public involvement that you're looking for. He would rather see a focused group of stakeholders.

Dr. DeCinque thought it would be a good idea to get the Kaiser group involved.

Co-Chair Lyons thought that there has been more than enough discussion regarding the issue. Let's just do it and the people will come along. He said that they have a Comprehensive Plan, now let's move along and put the vision statement on top of it and keep on working.

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Dr. DeCinque thought that this was really up to the Mayor and Council as to whether it is able to just be done. He would really like to take Co-Chair Lyons approach and just do it and not spend any more additional time on it. All the committee wanted to do is come up with a statement that could go to the front of the plan that was true to the plan.

Mr. Rice said he has no problem with the Vision Statement. He then went on to talk about community representation, as it pertains to poor people.

Dr. DeCinque wondered if Co-Chair Ney could request some support money from Congressman Houghton, for this project.

There was discussion regarding a press release.

Mrs. Harkness discussed the image building campaign of Jamestown.

The next meeting will be held on April 4, 2001.

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

Shirley A. Sanfilippo, CMC, RMC  
City Clerk

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