

20/20 VISION
VILLAGE OF WILLIAMSVILLE COMMUNITY PLAN
COMMUNITY PLAN COMMITTEE

APPROVED MEETING NOTES – JANUARY 30, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 PM.

Community Plan Committee Attendees: Steven Appler, David Brody, Mary Carr, Paul Iskalo, Brian Kulpa, Pastor Timothy Madsen, Victor Paquet, Charles Rizzone, Wesley Stone, Kate Waterman-Kulpa

Absent: Thomas Claxton, Kim Giannelli-Calos, Todd Nelson, Walter Pacer, Carolyn Schlifke, David Vitka, Edward Zabel

Consultant/Town/Village Staff Present: John Behan, Lawrence Bice, Amy Dake, Steve Ferranti, Joelle Guy, Dan Howard, Lynda Juul, Sally Kuzon

Village Board Members: Mayor Lowther, Trustee Geary, Trustee Piazza, Trustee Slick, Trustee Sweeney

Residents/Other Attendees: Chris Church (NYS DOT), Thomas Frank

APPROVAL OF MEETING NOTES

On motion by David Brody, seconded by Kate Waterman-Kulpa, the meeting notes of November 28, 2006 were approved.

Unanimously carried.

INTRODUCTIONS

Lawrence Bice thanked everyone who sent in images from the committee. He asked the members to come in at their leisure to write down their comments pertaining to these images. He asked that they write down the number of the image when they are doing this; they will then incorporate the notes together.

During the next couple of meetings, the consultant will be trying to narrow down some of the land use and economic concepts in preparation for their first public workshop. This will probably take place in April. The goal tonight is to try to further develop these concepts.

He then turned the presentation over to Steve Ferranti and Amy Dake of SRF Associates. SRF Associates will be completing the context sensitive highway solution portion of the plan that is being funded by a Quality Communities Grant through New York State.

TRAFFIC & TRANSPORTATION REVIEW – SRF ASSOCIATES

Steve Ferranti reviewed his agenda and a handout was distributed to the Committee. He discussed CSS, or context sensitive solutions, which is a new philosophy that has been embraced by many agencies, including the DOT, and has to do with how they look at roadways and the surrounding land use. In the past, safety and efficiency were the main priorities. This is not so today; greater weight is being placed on the values of the community. He is looking for the Committee's view of the context along Main Street as it exists today, as well as how they would like to see it in the future. Maps were placed on the tables in front of committee members, and they were asked to mark limits that defined different context areas along that corridor, these can range from rural settings to an urban core. In Williamsville the suburban, urban zones (C-3, C-4, and C-5) are more applicable (a table of Context Zone Characteristics is attached at the end of the meeting notes for reference). Lawrence noted that certain design concepts are applied to different zones.

The first group, represented by Kate Waterman-Kulpa, reported that they see the existing conditions of C-5, with C-4 extending out from the center of the Village. They would like to see the area from Union Road to Evans/Garrison as C-5 with C-4 moving towards the high school (to the east).

The second group, represented by Pastor Madsen, had similar findings. However, they had trouble with the area across from the cemetery near the senior housing. They also felt they would like to see boundaries of Union Road and Evans/Garrison.

The presentation handout from SRF was then reviewed (see attached handout from SRF). The committee discussed various issues, including lack of parking vs. lack of shared parking, traffic issues, walking zones, road lane widths, and road configuration alternatives. The Committee's input will be used to define some of the context sensitive solutions for Main Street.

LAND USE DISCUSSION – BEHAN PLANNING

Lawrence Bice then revisited land use, and the South Long Park recreation area. A handout with several land use concepts for the area was given to the committee (see attached handout from Behan). Lawrence noted that the illustrations are strictly conceptual, and are by no means site plan proposals. They will guide, but not dictate future development.

Lawrence showed various scenarios of what could happen in the S. Long area, including more park space and higher density residential. Paul Iskalo commented that he liked the last plan. He believes parks should be in front of residences and not behind them. It's consistent with the objectives of master planning and presents an opportunity for creating a unique space with tighter scale residential. He feels there is a demand for this, but not much of it in the Village; the first block of S. Long could be used nicely as a mixed use area. There may be better utilization of the ball field as well, depending on how frequently it is used.

David Brody indicated that he was looking for something with a little more density, possibly three to four times the density shown. He discussed moving the playing fields down in the lower southeast corner, with higher density closer to Main Street. John Behan clarified that he wants to be careful about eliminating any park land.

Charles Rizzone wondered why higher density is necessary. He is concerned about the impact on the people who currently live there. He likes mixed density, but does not want to see anything higher than a two-story building. He felt that density is equivalent to profitability. Paul Iskalo disagreed, and indicated he was speaking as a Village resident and not a developer. He feels that for Main Street to be viable, people have to live closer. The way to achieve this is by having more density near Main Street. These are the people who will walk the Village and dine at the restaurants. David Brody commented that you don't have to reduce the size of the park if you increase the density. There are single family houses and doubles everywhere. There isn't an option of living in an \$80,000 to \$100,000 unit. He agreed that without those people in the Village, there aren't people on Main Street. Lawrence clarified that denser housing doesn't necessarily translate into affordable housing.

Mary Carr said she would like to take out some of the roadways and make them more walkable to force people to walk, with alleyways in the back, garages in the back, and porches in the front.

Steve Appler commented that as soon as you start talking about high density, people think of high buildings. It all depends on the density. Nobody wants another senior tower, but attractive nice looking housing would be okay. It depends on how they are designed.

John Behan stated that the densest scenario shown probably only doubles the current density, and wouldn't feel a lot different than the rest of the village.

Brian Kulpa had an issue with giving up park land for more of what we already have (single family housing). He would like to decrease the amount of single-family housing shown and add more active recreation. This would let you get a way with a higher density pattern to the west. Creating a park in the north corner could make it feel like it's someone else's park, and that it's dedicated to the new neighborhood. David Brody didn't want to segregate this area from the new area. He doesn't feel there is a need for single-family homes in the new neighborhood.

Wes Stone liked the idea of a park on the east side. David Brody agreed, and felt that the park could be like a square that incorporates the new and the old.

Brian Kulpa is on the Parks Committee in the Village, and stated that they feel the park is too far to the north and west and not accessible to the neighborhoods. He said the residents have accepted the ball diamond being there, but that the immediate residents don't use it.

Kate Waterman-Kulpa felt it was scary to see the large park space disappear. She feels it's sticky to sell park land for development. The park is one of the reasons she moved to that neighborhood. The plan needs to appreciate the residents that currently live there.

Lawrence stated that he will come up with another concept to present to the committee.

John Behan commented again that there is a concern with the park space. If park space is taken, it needs to be replaced. The configuration should meet the needs of the community. He wants the community to tell them how to best use it. They would like to see enough vitality in terms of amount of housing to help support Main Street, but need to strike a balance without it becoming controversial to the community. It should be a positive thing; there is sensitivity to height and traffic issues.

David Brody is in favor of new urbanism, and believes that housing surrounding park land is a good thing.

John Behan asked about bringing more attention to the railway station, and if this is something the committee would like to see. Brian Kulpa felt that people want more access to Lehigh Memorial Trail, and stated that good public access with a good pedestrian right of way is a nice gesture. Village history relies heavily upon what has happened with rail and rail development. By highlighting this, it would be beneficial to the community as a whole.

West Stone also liked that idea. He feels that the park is hard to access in wet weather. The concepts presented would open the whole area up to many more people.

Mary Carr was interested in finding out statistics on how the park is used. Brian Kulpa stated that he felt that the majority of use is from families accessing the playground equipment and the south-east corner of the park; that seems to be where most of the current attention is. Many people cross the park to get to Lehigh Memory Trail. Over the summer, the Parks Committee helped organize a youth tennis program. Also there is a fireman's baseball league and youth softball league that utilize the ball diamond. He believes it's the home diamond for Hutchinson Hose.

Vic Paquet stated that this is the only park in that quadrant of the Village, and feels that there isn't enough recreational space.

WILLIAMSVILLE WATER MILL RE-USE – BEHAN PLANNING

Lawrence showed various images of mills from around the Rochester Finger Lakes area. One of the mills was privately re-used, but had a lot of public access. There is an art gallery and restaurant. Lawrence stated that he would be happy to setup a volunteer field trip to this area. Web sites for the locations were listed on the handout.

NEXT COMMITTEE MEETING

The next committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2007 at 7:00 PM.

David Versel's economic analysis will be presented. Also, the land use discussion will be continued, with a finalization of the Long Street discussion. Other topics to be discussed include a conceptual land use map, mill and park concepts, and preliminary traffic concepts.

Lawrence stated that he would like to get comments on the photos submitted by committee members before the next meeting. He would like them in the next two weeks. A poster will be available for review at Village Hall. Replies can be written down, or e-mailed to Sally Kuzon.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Thomas Frank had a letter which he read and submitted to the Committee.

CLOSE OF MEETING

On motion by David Brody, seconded by Steve Appler, the meeting was adjourned at 9:37 PM.

Unanimously carried.