

Project Name: Mineola New York Forward (NYF)
Subject: Local Planning Committee Meeting #4

Meeting Location: Village Hall Community Center (155 Washington Ave)
Meeting Date: September 9th, 2024
Meeting Time: 6:00-8:00 PM

Participants: **Local Planning Committee**

Mayor Paul Pereira, Co-Chair
Resi Cooper, Co-Chair
Carol Giordano
Maria “Cina” Ahostinho Palumbo
James Sherry
Michael Spae
Gina Buongiovanni
Manuel Norona
John Doyle

New York State

Rachel Bruce, Department of State (DOS)
Brandon Gimpelman, Empire State Development (ESD)

Consultant Team

Susan Favate, Principal, BFJ Planning
Mark Freker, Associate, BFJ Planning
Eshti Sookram, Planner, BFJ Planning

The purpose of this meeting was to briefly review the planning process, present State evaluation criteria, discuss public and private project submissions received since the Open Call was extended, and to recap project development and Project Sponsor follow-ups. Approximately 15 members of the public attended the meeting as attendees. The presentation is posted on the [Mineola NYF website](#) and can be referred to for additional details.

Welcome and Introductions

- Susan Favate, Principal at BFJ Planning gave opening remarks and provided the evening's agenda.
- Ms. Favate introduced Department of State representatives, LPC members, and the Consultant Team, BFJ Planning. BFJ Planning is the lead consulting firm, supported by a team of subconsultants with specialties that include economic development, urban design, sustainability, and engineering. The consulting team is working together to develop content for the Strategic Investment Plan.
- Ms. Favate gave an overview of the NYF Code of Conduct, and the preamble was read aloud by Mayor and LPC Co-Chair Paul Pereira. This reminds LPC members that any potential conflict of interest must be disclosed at the earliest possible time. LPC members must complete and submit a formal Recusal form when a potential conflict is identified. No conflicts of interest were reported.

Planning Process & Engagement Updates

- Ms. Favate reviewed the timeline and deliverables, highlighting the team's schedule through the end of this year.
- Ms. Favate then touched upon engagement updates, including the conclusion of the online visioning survey. Responses to the online public survey can be found [here](#).
- Upcoming engagement opportunities include the public workshop on September 30th (6-8pm)

Project Evaluation Criteria

- Ms. Favate discussed eligibility requirements for NYF funding.
- Additionally, Mr. Favate gave an overview of the **eligible** project types (public improvement projects, new development and/or rehabilitation of existing downtown buildings, small project grant funds, branding and marketing) and **ineligible** project types/activities (planning activities, operations and maintenance, pre-award costs, property acquisition, training and other program expenses, expenses related to existing projects). Refer to the posted presentation for additional details.
- Standalone NYF projects must be a minimum of \$75,000 total cost. The Small Project Fund Interest Form is a separate solicitation process that will occur concurrently with the Open Call, for projects less than \$75,000.
- The NYF process will conclude with LPC consensus on recommended projects for submission to the State in the Strategic Investment Plan, and a vision for the Village's downtown revitalization.

- The final slate of recommended projects, finalized by the LPC, incorporates public feedback and includes requested NYF funds exceeding the awarded amount, leaving the State flexibility to make final selections in early 2025.

Potential Projects – Updates

The project team reviewed the submissions received from the Open Call for Projects, providing an in-depth discussion of the projects and related points of interest or issues. More details can be found in the [presentation slides, including project descriptions. The recap below focuses on updates provided to the LPC and questions/comments raised in discussion.](#)

Second Street & Main Street Redesign

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Priority to upgrade both Second St. and Main St.
 - Initial meeting held with Nassau County indicates overall support of project (roads are within County jurisdiction)
 - Will require coordination with new NYF proposal for potential mixed-use development on currently vacant site – i.e. public access at pocket park.
 - Detailed cost estimates are needed.
 - Should coordinate with wayfinding/ streetscape enhancement project.
- LPC Discussion:
- Suggestions were made to hide utility poles and lines on Second and Main Street, as they currently take up significant sidewalk space. Although some power lines in this area were previously buried when Morgan Parc was constructed, there is an opportunity to bury more, especially on Main Street.
- The timing of traffic lights on Mineola Blvd and Second Street will be studied by the County in the near future, though this will not be accomplished during the New York Forward (NYF) timeframe.

Public Mural on The Pavilion Parking Garage Wall

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Contact has not been made with the building owner; Is owner interested? Village owns land, building is under private ownership.
 - Determine scale/size of mural.
 - Logistics of installation: artist commission, materials, etc.
 - Detailed cost estimates needed.
 - Determine design of ground area

Train Station Area Improvements

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Coordinate with wayfinding efforts.
 - Coordinate design of surface materials with 2nd-Main streetscape redesign
 - Analyze parking changes related to design/pedestrianization.
 - Coordinate with Morgan Parc owner.
- LPC Discussion:

- Questions were raised about the underpasses under Mineola Blvd, and it was confirmed that they are included in the design considerations.
- It was suggested that if wayfinding is done correctly, both underpasses could be utilized effectively.
- The focus is primarily on improving pedestrian conditions, but traffic improvements may also be considered if funds allow.

Wayfinding/Signage & Streetscape Enhancements

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Met with Village DPW to discuss priority locations for streetscape enhancements – still being defined.
 - CDBG funding secured for parking signage.
 - Cost estimates: Determine quantity of signs and locations; Inventorying other items such as trash receptacles, street trees, lighting.
 - Address challenge of public seating.
- LPC Discussion:
 - It was clarified that the funding would not cover the design itself but would be used to hire an expert to conduct a study, with funds also allocated for the design of the signs.
 - There was agreement that the existing newer Village signs are favorable, and maintaining a unified aesthetic would be beneficial.
 - The intention is to ensure any new signs align with the historic look of the Village, particularly for directing people to parking lots and distinguishing their types.
 - It was noted that there may be funds available for the actual signage as well.

Village of Mineola Marketing & Branding Study

- Updates/Next Steps: Could timing be prioritized to inform new Village wayfinding?
- Mixed public feedback on current Village logo – Study could dive deeper.
- Longer term strategy: Is a Business Improvement District (BID) appropriate for Mineola?

94 Main Street Renovation – Creations de Belle

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Two apartments are currently occupied; No interior improvements planned for these spaces. Planned façade materials - Front façade: brick; vinyl for sides/back. Refined cost estimates requested.

The Bridge – Century Lounge

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Uniqueness of ownership structure – project team working with developer and project sponsor; Sponsor will receive white box construction for interior fit out.
 - Refined cost estimates have been requested.
 - As part of approvals – certain number of community events at no cost per year; Otherwise, a combination of third-party promoted events and corporate events.
 - Project Sponsor would issue RFP for venue management.
- LPC Discussion:
 - Preliminary discussions with the developer suggest that a certain number of designated days each year will be given to the Village for free public use, such as concerts and meetings.
 - Concerns were raised about the lounge's proximity to the train, with the belief that its success depends on exterior aesthetics.
 - The County is expected to address the area under the bridge, though it was noted that this underpass is not a desirable area for congregation, as it leads to nowhere.
 - Additionally, the Board approved owner-occupied condominiums instead of rentals, and the event space height was increased from 12 feet to two stories.
 - Questions were raised about parking when the space is rented.
 - The building would provide parking, and the garage through the underpass would offer access after business hours, which is when the space would most likely be used.
 - There may also be discussions about the developer purchasing parking passes for the business.
 - Clarification was sought on "white box" construction, which means the sponsor would not fully build out the area but would handle the fit-out. Cost estimates need to be worked out for technology, bar space, and interior finishes. A rendering should be available by the workshop.

199 Jericho: Mixed-Use Development

- Updates/Next Steps:
 - Same developer as The Bridge – not as far along in the process
 - Anticipated public realm improvements: sidewalk pavers, street trees, potential powerline burying. Unexpected requirement to bury power lines is likely to increase project costs.
 - Concept and rendering being finalized for submission to Village.
 - Variables in flux: Powerlines and façade preservation.
- LPC Discussion:
 - Questions were raised about whether parking would remain behind the building.
 - It was noted that no official application has been submitted to the Village yet.
 - The building would not extend to Washington Ave., so there would be open-air parking with a requirement of 1.5 spaces per unit.

- Preserving the historic façade is important, and burying power lines would enhance aesthetics.
- Traffic concerns were discussed, but since the development is residential and less than a mile from the train station, it still qualifies as transit-oriented development (TOD).
- There were concerns about project timing as needed for coordination with NYF.
- There was a debate about whether this project should receive a significant portion of NYF funding or if funds should be distributed more evenly.
- Questions about affordability were raised, with the minimum requirement being 10% affordable housing, though this building could have up to 50% affordable units in coordination with The Bridge development.
- To ensure affordability, it would not have many amenities, and the Long Island Housing Partnership would regulate the units.
 - A distinction was made between low-income and affordable housing.
- Concerns were voiced about placing affordable units on Jericho, where there are no amenities.
 - It was clarified that because the development consists of condominiums rather than rental units, it's not technically required to include affordable housing.
- Questions were raised about whether affordable units would have the same finishes as units near the railroad, but it was noted that this project would still be more affordable overall.

102-104 Main Street Renovations

- Issues/Questions
 - Is this part of the Downtown core area?
 - Does LPC want to support oil to gas conversion?
 - Could façade upgrades be higher?

210-212 Willis Ave. Renovations

- Issues/Questions
 - Façade treatment details need to be coordinated – design standards; Cohesion with 208 Willis?
 - Does LPC want to fund oil to gas conversion?

The St. James Façade Renovation

- Issues/Questions
 - Project sponsor is refining scope of work and cost estimates.
 - Will require coordination between General Manager, building owner, and business owner.
 - Small Project Fund candidate, depending on revised scope outcome?

Second-Main Street Mixed Use Development

- Questions/Next Steps

- Sponsor is developing rendering and site plan – No formal submission yet to the Village.
- Cost estimates underway
- Coordinate with Second-Main Street Redesign project for sidewalk design.
- Design and function of public space/pocket park that would be built as a public amenity?
- LPC Discussion:
 - Questions were raised about whether the project was initially going to be a hotel.
 - It was clarified that this was an early concept, but it is no longer being considered.
 - The front page of the Williston Times used an image from a New York Forward (NYF) application showing the "potential" development, but that is not the current plan.
 - Progress with the current developer in the past few months has surpassed that of the previous few years, with the project now likely in the 50-unit range, possibly allowing for additional height.
 - Despite efforts to negotiate with the property owner for 182-184 Second Street, they have not agreed. There was hope that the owner of the 182-184 Second Street property would sell, but since they have not, the project will need to be built around it.
 - Although not finalized, there is a preference for the Village to take ownership and maintain the pocket park. In the incentive/historic zone, certain amenities are required to relax restrictions like height.

Small Project Fund

- Issues / Questions
 - Local demand has been demonstrated – LPC should consider whether this project should be funded at the minimum \$300,000 or increase up to \$600,000.
- Updates on Letter of Interest Submissions
 - Oak and Orange
 - Tsontos Furs
 - 159 Jericho Turnpike
 - 223-225 Willis Ave
 - 262 Jericho Turnpike
 - Spaghetтини – increased NYF ask; (above \$75,000)
 - PS Burger – increased NYF ask; (above \$75,000)
 - Mineola Diner – new submission
- LPC Discussion:
 - There was a discussion about whether many of the projects would be redirected to the ones handled by CDBG Funding.
 - It was clarified that this could happen, but it was emphasized that Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds are insufficient to cover all the projects and would take years to do so.
 - The focus should be on the larger projects around 2nd and Main, while the Small Project Fund could be spread across the entire New York Forward area.
 - There was support for spreading the funds more evenly to avoid extensive delays.

- There was an agreement that projects like PS Burgers and Spaghetini are needed.

Early-Stage Project Cost Summary

- At this stage, project costs remain subject to change.
- Public projects are estimated to cost approximately \$3,275,000.
- The total cost for private projects exceeds \$18,000,000, with a NYF funding request of around \$2,344,000. It is important to note that private sponsors are required to contribute at least 25% per project, with many exceeding this threshold.
- The Small Project Fund was initially set at \$300,000.
- The overall cost for all projects is estimated at nearly \$22 million, with a total NYF funding request approaching \$6 million.
- There was also discussion about increasing the Small Project Fund to \$600,000.

Next Steps

- Local Planning Committee Meetings: 6-8pm at Village Hall Community Center
 - Tuesday, October 15 – New Date!
 - Monday, November 4
 - This date is likely to change, and the final meeting might be virtual.
- Public Workshops
 - Public Workshop #2 – September 30th 6-8pm
- Online Engagement
 - Vision Survey closed; Responses can be viewed at: www.MineolaNYF.com
 - Public Survey #2 launching around time of second workshop.
- Websites
 - www.MineolaNYF.com
 - www.ny.gov/programs/ny-forward

LPC Comments and Questions

- Can a project scope/focus be changed if not everyone agrees with it?
 - Project sponsors can be urged to revise their submissions based on specific LPC feedback.
- While some LPC members expressed concerns about funding interior improvements, others expressed interest to consider such elements.
 - It was emphasized that each project should be evaluated individually, with flexibility for the Local Planning Committee (LPC) to decide on eligible expenses. If a project has a catalytic effect, it should not be dismissed outright if it meets eligibility criteria.
- Decisions about local Small Project Fund criteria will be made later, and the Strategic Investment Plan can include suggestions about what should or should not be eligible, with the Village taking these into account.
- The public mural project should be considered a “strong project”, although contact with the building owner must be made.
- Concerns were expressed that 199 Jericho might not be ready for development within the NYF timeframe.

- 102-104 Main Street, a historic building, is expected to have a catalytic effect due to its prime location. The LPC is more likely to prioritize façade enhancements rather than oil to gas conversion.
- The LPC reached a consensus to move forward with 102-104 Main Street and to recommend 210-212 Willis Ave. for future Small Project Fund consideration.
- It was noted that CDBG funds can be considered for future projects that fall within eligible areas – particularly for façade improvements.
- The LPC agreed that Spaghettini and PS Burgers should be considered for the Small Project Fund rather than as standalone projects.

Public Comment & Questions

- Q: I saw in previous documents and presentations about having green areas. What is going on with the rail yard?
 - A: The Mayor stated there is no recollection or documentation that the space was supposed to be green space. It was intended to be yard space for the Long Island Railroad (LIRR), and the previous building became landlocked.
- Q: How are the projects benefiting people that live in the Village? Mineola feels overpopulated and like a city. Why not invest in the park?
 - A: The Mayor clarified that in 1970, the Village had 20,000 residents, and now it has fewer. As for recent events, the "Sounds on Second" events showed hundreds of residents enjoying the activation of Second Street. Additionally, \$2 million was invested in a park two years ago. The goal of investing in Downtown revitalization has been ongoing, and the NYF program further supports that.