

Project Name: Mineola New York Forward (NYF)
Subject: Local Planning Committee Meeting #6

Meeting Location: Virtual (via Zoom)
Meeting Date: November 18th, 2024
Meeting Time: 6:00-8:00 PM

Participants: **Local Planning Committee**
Mayor Paul Pereira, Co-Chair
Resi Cooper, Co-Chair
Michael Spae
Carol Giordano
Maria “Cina” Ahostinho Palumbo
James Sherry
John Doyle
Gina Buongiovanni
Not present: Manuel Norona

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 final Local Planning Committee (LPC) meeting was to provide final project scope and cost estimate updates, share results from the second public survey, and conclude with the LPC voting on the final slate of projects. Approximately 20 members of the public attended the meeting virtually 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.
- Eshti Sookram, Planner at BFJ Planning then provided engagement updates, including results from the second public survey in which participants ranked each project's potential for contribution to downtown revitalization, and were given the chance to comment on individual projects.
- The public survey was open from October 23rd to November 10th. Ms. Sookram explained that over 120 residents and workers participated, providing 345 comments to inform the final slate of projects. Common sentiments are summarized below. Please refer to meeting slides for an account of additional survey metrics.
 - **Redesign Second and Main Street:** Nearly 75% of respondents stated that they either agree or strongly agree that this project would play a key role in revitalizing Mineola, citing its benefits for pedestrian safety and downtown aesthetics. Finalizing tree placement and parking management remain priorities.
 - **Train Station Connectivity Improvements:** Strong support was noted for new lighting, public art, and promoting the walkway as an alternative to Second Street. Parking near the underpass remains a concern.
 - **Streetscape/Signage & Lighting Enhancements:** Respondents prioritized better lighting, aesthetic upgrades, carefully placed street trees, and well-designed seating.
 - **Pavilion Garage Mural & Public Space:** Suggestions included adding a mural and creating a mini park to activate the underused kiss-and-ride lot.
 - **Village of Mineola Marketing & Branding Study:** Feedback focused on increasing community activities and awareness, with mixed opinions on the logo and project costs.

- **The Bridge – Century Lounge:** General support for a new venue with opportunities for public events, though some respondents raised concerns about parking management and project cost.
- **94 Main Street – Creations de Belle:** Respondents highlighted the importance of improving downtown facades and coordinating with similar projects, though some raised concerns about broader revitalization impacts.
- **102-104 Main Street Renovations:** Similar feedback to 94 Main Street, with respondents emphasizing support for facade improvements, the need to coordinate with other façade projects, and questions raised about revitalization impacts.
- **The Saint James Facade Renovation:** Strong support due to its alignment with the Second-Main Street Redesign project. Respondents expressed interest in additional aesthetic upgrades but noted the facade was recently updated.
- **199 Jericho Mixed-Use Development:** Mixed support, with agreement on the need for redevelopment balanced with concerns over parking and traffic. The aim to preserve the historic bank façade received support.
- **Spaghettini Upgrades & Patio/Alley Improvements:** Support for creating a year-round quasi-outdoor dining space and beautifying the alleyway, though some respondents raised concerns about revitalization impacts.
- **Establish a Small Project Fund:** Strong public backing for helping small businesses thrive and enhancing the NY Forward area.
- Ms. Sookram explained that the State requires private projects to be included in the final slate, as some respondents questioned why NY Forward would support private sponsors. Additional details can be found in the presentation posted on the [Mineola NYF website](#).

Potential Projects – Updates

The project team reviewed candidate NY Forward project updates, providing an in-depth discussion of the projects and related points of interest or issues. More details can be found in the [meeting 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:
 - The overall cost estimate went down.
 - The scope now includes burying utility poles on the block of Main Street (\$433,000) to focus on enhancing downtown core aesthetics.
 - Cost estimate refinements were made on surface materials (pavers) and amenities/greenery.
 - An updated rendering was provided; however, the final design will be developed by the Village at a later date.

Train Station Connectivity Improvements

- Updates:
 - Cost estimates have been finalized.
 - The new project private match from the owners of Morgan Parc is \$218,000 for alleyway resurfacing, with the NYF funding request reduced accordingly.
 - More robust lighting has been added to the underpass.
 - A refined approach to public art has been developed.

- An updated rendering has been provided, detailing the addition of more robust lighting, public art, and red brickwork.

Public Mural on The Pavilion Parking Garage Wall

- Updates:
 - The cost estimate increased by \$250,000 to ensure a high-quality mural installation with appropriate finishes.
 - The ground area scope now emphasizes landscaping and creating a flexible space under the mural, including new surface treatments, mural lights, landscaping, and limited seating.
 - The food truck pad and pergola/gazebo have been removed from the project scope but could be added at a later time (with non-NY Forward funding).
 - A letter of support from the MTA-LIRR has been received to undergo these changes.

Streetscape/Signage & Lighting Enhancements

- Updates:
 - The cost estimate increased by \$100,000.
 - A refined approach has been developed for lighting, parking meters, and kiosk signs.
 - Precise wayfinding details and locations will be decided at a later time.
- LPC Discussion:
 - It was noted that kiosks could be installed near parking garages to provide information about Downtown Mineola, encouraging visitors to explore additional destinations after parking.
 - Vision Accomplished mentioned the potential to install consistent new signage at parking garages and parking fields through CDBG funds.

Village of Mineola Marketing & Branding Study

- Updates: No Updates
- LPC Discussion: What are the priorities for the marketing and branding study?
 - The LPC generally agreed on the importance of a cohesive and consistent logo to represent the Village and its events. While many members appreciated the Village's current logo, they noted opportunities to modernize it for use in conjunction with the official design.
 - Some members expressed enthusiasm for incorporating unique elements, such as cultural or historical references, into the updated logo, emphasizing its distinctiveness on Long Island.
 - There was consensus on the need for a unified logo and identity to bring cohesion to Village events and communication efforts, particularly the Mineola event series.
 - Members suggested that the updated logo could draw inspiration from the existing logo, incorporating elements like the feather or references to Mineola as the County seat, but with a modernized and stylized approach.
 - Maintaining the existing color scheme was emphasized as a priority to ensure continuity with the Village's existing branding.

- Overall, a potential updated logo design is envisioned as a supplemental identity to the official Village logo.

94 Main Street Renovation – Creations de Belle

- Updates:
 - Finalized cost estimates have been provided, with the total cost increasing by \$70,000.
 - Final scope additions include additional exterior improvements, such as a new awning, gooseneck lighting, and upgrades to the side and back doors, aligning with the LPC’s preference for maximizing project impact.

The Bridge – Century Lounge

- Updates:
 - There have been no major scope changes.
 - The project team is coordinating financial details with the sponsor.

199 Jericho: Mixed-Use Development

- Updates:
 - Cost estimates for the project as a whole have increased, however the NY Forward funding ask remains the same.
 - The project team is coordinating financial details with the sponsor.

102-104 Main Street Renovations

- Updates:
 - Finalized cost estimates have been provided, with the total cost increasing by \$33,000.
 - New scope additions include commercial lighting and enhancements to the entryway design with a decorative glass window.

The St. James Façade Renovation

- Updates:
 - The cost estimate increased by \$15,500 to account for a 10% contingency.
 - There are no changes to the project scope.
 - A meeting was held with the business owner to confirm sponsor responsibilities and plans for executing the project.

Spaghetini & Second Street Alleyway Upgrades

- Updates
 - Final cost estimates have been provided.
 - Letters of support have been received, and coordination for alleyway repaving will take place with The Saint James property owner

Small Project Fund

- Updates

- No updates.
- LPC Discussion: What parameters should the LPC set if a nonprofit is to submit a proposal for the Small Project Fund?
 - The LPC generally agreed on the importance of supporting nonprofits through flexible match requirements.
 - A distinction was agreed upon for qualifying nonprofits: Mineola-based/local community-serving nonprofits should not be subject to matching requirements, while larger nonprofits could a reduced matching requirement.
 - It was clarified that all applicants, including nonprofits, would be required to apply for the Small Project Fund next year if the project is approved by the State.
 - As the proposed Small Project Fund administrator, the Village would work with the State to finalize eligibility parameters.

Early-Stage Project Cost Summary

- At this stage, project costs are mostly final but minor changes could still occur based on sponsor follow-ups.
- Public projects are estimated to cost approximately \$3,432,000.
- The total cost for private projects is nearly \$21,000,000, with a NYF funding request of around \$2,517,000. 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 NYF request has been set at \$600,000.
- The overall cost for all projects is estimated at just over \$25.3 million, with a total NYF funding request over \$6.5 million.

LPC Questions and Comments

- **Q:** Can the State choose to approve only a portion of the requested funding?
 - **A:** Yes, the State can approve funding for less than the full amount—it is not an all-or-nothing decision.
- **Q:** Who would be responsible for fine-tuning project details in the future?
 - **A:** The Village, as the project sponsor, will be responsible. They will contract with the State and maintain control over the project details.
- **Q:** Any final thoughts from the LPC?
 - **A:** Appreciation was expressed for the time and efforts of the LPC members, Village, Project Team and all involved in improving and brightening Mineola's future.

LPC Vote

The LPC concluded the meeting with a vote on the final slate of projects.

- The vote is conducted by slate rather than project-by-project. The LPC does not prioritize individual projects but instead votes on the entire slate as a whole.
- A preliminary “show of hands” vote was conducted during the meeting, with all LPC members raising their hands, thereby approving the final slate of projects to move forward.

- A final ballot will be sent to all LPC members in the coming days, with completed ballots due back to the consultants by November 25th at 11 a.m.

Next Steps

- BFJ will send a fillable PDF ballot to the LPC members. This will be utilized as the official voting record. Ballots are due by November 25th, 11am. Consultants will continue coordinating with project sponsors to finalize project details and address any minor cost estimate adjustments.
- By the end of November, BFJ will submit the Draft Plan to the State.
- The Final NY Forward Plan is due to the State by mid-December.

What happens when the NYF Plan is complete?

- Project award winners should be announced in the first half of 2025.
 - State makes final selections from the slate voted on by the LPC.
- Public projects will be undertaken by Village of Mineola.
- If approved by the State, the Small Project Fund will be administered locally by the Village. Recipients will be selected through a competitive process.
- NYF funding is reimbursable – rather than an up-front grant, project sponsors are reimbursed for expenses incurred.

Public Comment & Questions

- **Q:** Are there any considerations for upgrading crosswalks and traffic signs?
 - **A:** Some of this is included in the public projects, such as the Second and Main Street project, but it is not a Village-wide upgrade.
- **Q:** Will a small, mom-and-pop-style movie theater ever be a possibility in Mineola?
 - **A:** That would depend on the private sector making such a proposal. It is always a challenge to secure private investment for this type of project.
- **Q:** Are there any updates on the bumpy streets and blocks leading to the LIRR?
 - **A:** This specific State program (NYF) is focused on catalytic projects aimed at Downtown revitalization and does not address broader infrastructure repairs like street repaving.
- **Q:** Can the public receive a ballot to vote?
 - **A:** Ballots are only available to members of the LPC, but community input is always valued in planning efforts.
- **Q:** Any additional feedback?
 - **A:** Appreciation was expressed for the final LPC session, with positive comments on its organization and impact for the Village of Mineola.