

NY Forward – Capital Region – Hoosick Falls

Subject	Meeting Notes LPC Meeting #4	Date	Monday, Sept 23, 2024
Place	Hoosick Armory, 80 Church St, Hoosick Falls	Time	3:00-5:30pm
Distribution	<u>Local Planning Committee</u> Robert Allen, (Mayor and Co-chair) Brian Williams (Co-chair) Doug Sauer Trish Bloomer James Monahan Ric DiDonato Paula Kamperman Gayle Donohue Craig Kennedy Mike Danforth Mike Willemsen Marianne Zwicklbauer Aaron Buzzinski	<u>State Team</u> Matthew Smith, DOS <u>Consultant Team</u> Ian Nicholson, Buro Happold Daniel D'Oca, Interboro <u>Public</u> ~22 individuals	

Meeting Summary:

Please see 'HF_LPC Meeting 4_Slides_record' for the presentation shared during the meeting, which parallels the discussion summarized below.

*Action items are called out in **bold-italic highlight***

Welcome and Agenda

Ian (BH) welcomes the group to the fourth New York Forward LPC meeting. He briefly overviews the meeting agenda and reminds the room that these meetings are open to the public, but not intended to be public interactive workshops.

Opening Remarks

Mayor Allen (LPC Co-Chair) shares his excitement about the submitted projects, and the difficulty in evaluating the projects that all have great potential for Hoosick Falls.

Code of Conduct

Ian (BH) reads the Code of Conduct preamble, and reviews key points from the Code of Conduct that LPC members are expected to abide by. The list of LPC members recused for each project is presented as well as clarification that the Mayor does not need to recuse himself from the village projects.

Additional recusals are noted by various members, which are reflected in the record slides.

Updates: Planning Process & Engagement

Ian (BH) review of what's been done so far, public workshop results, and what is on the horizon (see slides).

- Project info is on the Instagram page and the NYF website.
- Review of engagement with each project and potential project pairings from the workshop and online engagement.

Submitted Projects

Ian (BH) reviews the primary vision of Hoosick Falls and the associated goals used as evaluation criteria for the submitted projects. A brief overview of the original projects received: 27 initial primary projects total, from 20 distinct sponsors, with \$17.2 million requested for New York Forward funds, leveraging over \$19.8 million in total investment.

Ian (BH) presents each of the submitted project evaluations, public responses, and updates in turn, with discussion among the LPC for each. Project sponsors were given the opportunity to speak to their project if LPC members had questions. The intent was to review evaluations of projects, understand updates, and ask remaining questions to be discussed with the project sponsors.

The notes below include discussion during the project-by-project run-thru, as well as during the summary discussion at the end, including noting which projects were removed from consideration.

A. Monument Park

- Assurance that other funding sources are available from NY State for the eventual realization of the fuller project.
- LPC members question about the amount of maintenance that will be needed. For the smaller version of the project, the Village has built in a certain number of hours that they are confident that staff can handle. For the eventual fuller project, the restrooms in the pavilion will be part of an extensive design study that presents various options along with their capital and maintenance cost implications.
- General agreement to pursue the smaller version of the project under the NYF grant, while planning and designing for the full project, to be built out in phases.

B. Hoosick Falls Branding & Marketing

- Emphasis placed by the LPC members that the branding will help bring more people into Hoosick Falls, not just visitors but new residents also.

C. Hoosic River Greenway Unification

- Clarification that the footbridge has been moved to the smaller version of the Monument Park project and is no longer included in this project.

D. Municipal Building Upgrades

- Discussed the potential to remove this project from consideration, given:
 - Its low alignment scores, including general skepticism of the extension proposal from both the public feedback and the LPC review comments;
 - Potential to fund the ramps thru a separate HCR grant for municipal accessibility;
 - Alternate Village proposal to accomplish the intent of the extension by pursuing the Murphy Building project instead.
- ***LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.***

E. Murphy Building Renovation

- Clarification that half of the upstairs will stay the way it is; once there is a more accurate depiction the Sponsor will provide a better cost – expected to be considerably lower than the \$1.7m currently presented.
- LPC member questions whether flooding is being considered. The Village does not currently have flooding considerations in the plans.
- LPC questioning the State review of this project – how favorably would this be scored, since it doesn't include any economic revitalization per se?
 - The Project is certainly eligible for NYF, and its competitiveness during review would be based on its returning a downtown building to productive service, preventing long-term vacancy.
- Once again confirmed that this project is redundant to the expansion portion of the Municipal Building upgrades. This will no longer be an issue, as that project will no longer be considered.

F. Pedestrian Infrastructure Improvements

- No specific comments noted.

G. Skating Rink Upgrade

- Could naming rights of the skating rink be an opportunity for additional funding?
- Clarification that the Town would continue to own the rink, but the Hoosac School would offer to manage operations and maintenance.
- Discussion about the status of the SAM grant, and reducing the NYF ask accordingly. The LPC generally expresses strong support for the project if this can be the case, and the NYF ask can be reduced significantly from its current \$1.5m.
- Discussed whether bleachers for spectators would be included in the design – to be determined.
- Discussion about locker rooms, which are proposed to be temporary trailer-type facilities. LPC sees value in incorporating permanent facilities if funding allows it.

H. Woods Brook Redevelopment

- Confirmation that this project will be incorporated into the SIP as a “pipeline project” for increased State awareness – confirmed that this means there will be no NYF funding request associated with the project.
- ***LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.***

I. Historical Society Carriage Barn Renovation

- Sponsor clarifies the main request is for climate control for the museum building itself. Responding to an LPC question, Sponsor will provide more information about how operations will change or improve with the updated climate control.

J. Hoosick Armory Modernization

- Discussion about the separated scope proposals, 1 for accessibility and 1 for energy efficiency. LPC agrees to continue considering both.
- Noted that it is a very large building, and the downstairs is currently underutilized and inaccessible.

K. Rescue Squad Improvements

- Sponsor acknowledges they knew they were unlikely to be recommended for NYF funding, but are hoping to discuss with State and Consultant team to identify different funds.
- ***LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.***

L. Total Playground Improvements

- One LPC member is very discouraged that there is no Town match proposed for the project. Another LPC member speaks approvingly of the facilities and their role in the local neighborhood.
- Project will continue to be considered for funding.

M. Woodbridge Heights Accessibility and Weatherization

- Discussion about the overall state of the building, and concern that significantly more work would need to be done to secure the building’s long-term future.
- Observation that there should be multiple other funding opportunities for a senior housing facility, including federal money or potentially a RAD conversion.
- ***LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.***

N. Firehouse Restaurant Renovation

- Sponsor noting they are currently having discussions with restaurant managers – the Sponsor will not manage the restaurant personally.
- Question about whether an elevator will be added for full accessibility.
 - Sponsor responds that the layout changes are specifically designed so that generally the 2nd floor will not be needed for day-to-day restaurant operations, and so an elevator would be far too costly for the scale of the space, and the limited need to access the 2nd floor.
- Question about a mapped street on the property that has not existed physically for many years – the Mayor expresses eagerness to formally de-map this street and transfer to the property owner, in the course of this project.

O. Game Store Renovation

- Project sponsor is looking to partner with the library or school, etc. because they want to give people something to do in town.

P. Historic Sweet Shop Restoration

- Discussion about the zoning implications of residential units on the ground floor – clarification that there are no restrictions in place against this, but also observing that the proposed unit faces the rear and so would not reduce commercial frontage.

Q. Lower Classic St Mixed-Use Revitalization

- No specific comments noted.

R. River St Intersection Signage

- LPC member requesting for the chargers to be separated out. Project sponsor noting this was included as a benefit and it would not be worth it to be its own project. Also observed that reduction of scope would reduce the project below the overall budget threshold to be considered as a standalone project.
- Confirmation that the signage would need variance to be used for 3rd parties.
- **LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.**

S. The Sand Bar Expansion

- Project sponsor notes there is \$12K per year to charities, just from volleyball team signup fees, and roughly 4x that from the associated raffles, and the proposed project would allow them to do 50% more.

T. STAY apARTments Redevelopment

- No specific comments noted.

U. Wood Block HoosArt Center Restoration

- No specific comments noted.

V. 1 Center St Warehouse Mixed-use Rehabilitation

- No specific comments noted.

W. 1 Mechanic St Warehouse Commercial Rehabilitation

- LPC member asks how many jobs this would bring in. Project sponsor answers the project would bring in 4 additional jobs within a year.
- Question about possibility of public realm beautification as part of the project – clarification that the Sponsor's property does not front the public way, but is nestled into the woods (the larger facility fronting Mechanic/Church St is separately owned).

X. 15 Church St Residential Rehabilitation

- Project sponsor mentions the building is registered as an historic building which limits the type of materials they are allowed to use, and makes them eligible for additional tax credits, which they are pursuing.
- Clarification that the cost breakdown is \$110K for the façade and the rest is for the apartment – including all plumbing, electrical, and sprinklers – none of which exist on the 3rd floor.

Y. 24 Church St Mixed-Use Renovation

- Observed that the Sponsor does not yet own the property – concern about whether their purchase is contingent upon the NYF grant award.
- Review of the submitted plans raises concerns about the feasibility of the proposed density and layout of apartment units, as well as impacts to in-tact historic materials on the interior.
- **LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.**

Z. 69 Church St Residential Renovation

- No specific comments noted. Extensive conversation about this proposal was held at the LPC-3 meeting (see those notes), and no updates since provided by Sponsor.
- **LPC unanimously agrees to discontinue consideration of this project for NYF funding.**

AA. 114 Church St

- Discussion about the parking required by zoning.

Small Project

Ian (BH) presents an overview of the evaluations and updates to projects, noting the projects that could be well suited for the small project fund. Discussion about where small projects fit into the overall process and confirmation that the LPC members would like to move forward with setting up a small project fund noting that there should be a cap for individual projects, to be determined at future meeting. General agreement to look at proposing a Small Project Fund at 10% of the total grant award, which would be \$450,000.

LPC Q&A

No specific comments noted.

Public Comment

No specific comments noted.

Next steps

Consultant team will follow up with all project sponsors for needed information and work to develop proposals further focusing on feasibility. LPC Meeting #5 will be 10/28 at 3pm in Hoosick Armory.

Closing Remarks (LPC Co-Chairs)

No specific comments noted.

END OF SUMMARY