LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING NO. 10
April 5th, 2017

Members Present:

(x) Jim Sharpe, Chairman
(x) Eric Fiebelkorn, GI Chamber of Commerce
(x) Mary West, Economic Development
(x) Pete Marston, Planning Board
(x) Paul Leuchner, Parks & Recreation
(x) Betty Harris, Traffic Safety
(x) Marion Fabiano, Zoning Board of Appeals
(x) Deborah Billoni, Citizen-at-Large
(x) Peter Coppola, Citizen-at-Large
(x) Martha Ludwig, Citizen-at-Large
(x) Sharon Osgood, Citizen-at-Large

Mike Madigan, Town Board

Members Excused:

(x) Beverly Kinney, Town Board
(x) Diane Evans, Conservation Board
William Koch, Historic Preservation

Members Absent:

(x) Dan Drexelius, Citizen-at-Large

Guests:

Brian Kulpa, Clark, Patterson, Lee
Melanie Anderson, Clark, Patterson, Lee
Elias Reden, Erie County Planning
Ben Bidell
Catherine Steffan
Patricia Covley

X indicates voting members

I. CALL TO ORDER: 7:01 p.m.

II. MINUTES

A motion was made by Martha / Eric to APPROVE the March 8, 2017 LRPC Draft minutes as written.

Ayes: All in favor.
Motion carried.
III. REVIEW DRAFT OUTREACH PLAN – Brian Kulpa, CPL

- PowerPoint presentation - outreach plans from other municipalities
- CPL will complete the traditional methodology as set forth by Erie County and in addition:
  - Public forums and breakout groups
  - Visual preference survey – public can input scores
  - Crowd sourcing
  - Bike & walking tours
  - Lego scale modeling - Town Center– density & mass
  - 3-D massing model
  - Tactical Urbanism events – committee members and public work together to see what works and what doesn’t

- Brian requested that over the next few days, committee members review the “draft outreach plan” and send comments, suggestions via email.

IV. LOGOS, BRANDING, PLAN IDENTITIES

- Reviewed CPL designed logos
- CPL suggested we have a logo – something that will identify the plan – will brand the plan
- Brainstorm logo ideas:
  - Our Grand Island
  - Heart of Niagara – with Grand Island shaped as a heart – rendering is on the screen in Town Hall
  - 14072 with the “0” in the shape of Grand Island
  - Plan has a 10 year window for implementation – GI 2027

V. DRAFT VISION STATEMENT

- A vision statement should be clear and straightforward.
  - Community values and aspirations
  - Shared view of what community wants the Town to be
  - Addresses all aspects that make up the community
  - Forward thinking, positive
  - “Steers the ship…”

- Reviewed Option #1.

“For the Town of Grand Island, recreation and the natural environment are the key assets of our community. Together with a vibrant, well-designed, and walkable town center, we envision our Town as an attractive destination to visitors, especially in the realm of eco-tourism. Grand Island will maintain its quaint character, shaped by our heritage, while encouraging a diverse business environment to ensure fiscal responsibility.”

- Members perspectives:
  - Quaint – not appropriate description
  - We are unique, we are an Island community, and nobody else in WNY can say that
  - We have WNY’s only threshold experience, a forced threshold perspective
  - Not self-sustaining
• **Review of Option #2.**

“The Town of Grand Island, at the heart of the Niagara River, envisions itself as a community that balances development, heritage, and the environment. Anchored by a vibrant, well-designed, and walkable town center and the natural features that characterize our community, we envision ourselves as a destination for visitors and families alike. Our cooperative efforts with other stakeholders will further capitalize on our many assets and provide greater economic and cultural opportunities for the Island in the future.”

• **Members perspectives:**

- Are we a community that balances development, heritage and the environment? Should the statement be that GI creates harmony between those ideas?
- Should the text read, we are, we will be, we want to go?
- We are an Island with country living, we live here to get away from the hub-bub of the city.
- Living on the Island is a lifestyle.
- Unique character
- Feel that the vision statements are too long.
- Enhance what we already have

• **Based on the last meeting Brian believes our focus is / should be:**

1) Development of a business center / community center
2) Develop and maintain our agricultural areas – agritourism
3) Eco Tourism – eco recreation
4) Want to maintain a relaxed atmosphere
5) Maintain local business
6) Unique Character
7) Heart of Niagara - component
8) Enhancements to what we have started
9) Harmony

CPL will rework the vision statement for next month.

### VI. DEPARTMENT OF STATE MODELING – Brian Kulpa, CPL

- Have 2 Department of State models started, need to work out debt service
- 2011 – 2015 model based on DOS accurately reporting up to 2015, they cannot confirm that 2016 figures are accurate.
- Total revenue sources – DOS is preparing everyone for 1% decreases in 2017 – 2020 in State Aid ratios
- Need to speak with DOS about what their numbers mean and need to speak with the Town’s accounting department, where are revenues and expenditures heading.
- Tax levy cap and increases, look at gap to fill, tax rate
- Eric – need growth to offset tax rate increases, you can have an agrarian society, but you have to be willing to pay for it, harmony works.
- You can’t build your way out of debt on the back of residential development
One decision offsets another & it should be part of our message in the plan.
Not all commercial development is evil, it can enhance the quality of your life
Last land use study was in 1992

VII. REVIEW OF LAND USE / TRANSPORTATION MAPS – Brainstorming

- Thruway Authority numbers show 30,000 cars a day going into Niagara Falls and 28,000 coming out of Niagara Falls toward Buffalo. 60,000+ vehicles per day cross the bridges. Traffic is an impact for people coming to the Island.
- Once you’re over the bridge, there is nothing that signals you to get off the 190.
- People avoid the round-about – travel to Whitehaven to exit
- If you take the first exit off the bridge, heading toward the roundabout, there is plenty of space and wide thoroughfares to build up an immediate commercial area right there, the first thing after you go through the gateway is you enter a commercial space.
- Can we be a “stay and play”, do we want micro-hotel areas elsewhere near the eco-tourism areas, or do we want to cluster everything.
- Beaver Island launches you onto an onramp
- Hotels are on the outskirts of town, not very easy for tourist to find, takes them away from business district
- What is on the Island we can utilize beyond the business district?
- Marion stated that we have a lot of visitors here using our sports facilities and we should take advantage of that.
- We have Fantasy Island, people may leave the park and stop for a quick meal, other than that they leave the Island.
- Jim felt that the River Oaks area will become a destination because of the golf course, marina, the hotel and fishing, and trails. Veterans Park, Fantasy Island, Branches on Whitehaven, KOA, Blue Water Ferry Village ecotourism, possible connections coming from Tonawanda, West River bike path. We have a ferry service that will be going to the city of Tonawanda.
- We need to work on linkage of the nodes. Hub and spokes, how do we create the spokes?
- Whitehaven is becoming a main corridor connecting the east to the west with a visitor’s center in the middle, Scenic Woods is being developed.
- ¼ mile - ½ walks, where people tend to top out
- Someone at Beaver Island with a perspective of 6 miles to get anywhere else on the island possibly embrace a one mile node. Does it have to be at the center of town? Should it be near Dick and Jenny’s? Perhaps a small hamlet center.
- Paul stated that the sewer districts need to be put on the map because that is the easiest places to develop, that would give you an idea of where the nodes would go.
- Look at opportunities and constraints.
- Where do we want the hub to be?
- Applying design standards does not help with existing buildings.
- Signs – color coding
- Think of the different pockets of Grand Island as a collection of different districts – foot of Whitehaven is a resort district, it’s where you do your golfing and boating, there is a hotel, we have a parks district, a rest stop & down town district.
- Developing an App for what to do on Grand Island was suggested, if marketing is done right, we can target people on their IPhone – Siri produces an app, geo fencing. Eric said he has about 60 slides of the GI app already built out, the biggest drawback to apps is that people with experience selling phone books build applications. People have to turn on the app, people have to allow themselves to be seen.
• Turn the Nike base into a destination, can be recreational hub for what is going to happen on West River.
• Create mini experiences, ie: go to Buckhorn and have lunch at the Beach House.
• Experiential events - porch fests – bands, tent, popular in urban areas. Possibilities for tactical urbanism event ideas.
• Town should require the State to advertise two national parks.
• Jim feels that it will happen now with the parkway, Beaver isn’t a destination for Grand Island, it is a destination for the State. Ferry Village is a destination for Grand Island. Need to capture attention that Beaver is getting and convert it back into residential. Only 1 entry and 1 exit into the park, need to divert traffic from that cavern.
• Paul – kayak launching outside the park in Ferry Village, it’s on park property but you don’t have to pay to get into the park.
• Committee should focus on Town Center, we need a strong core flanked by a couple hamlets, hub and spoke approach.

Jim asked Melanie to redefine her question – Melanie – we need to define areas along the thoroughfares, is there opportunity within the neighborhoods, perhaps vacant places that can become restaurants. Grand Island is unique and has a lot of potential, such as Love Rd from Baseline to Beaver Island Parkway, mix use feel, has vacant land. Ransom and Stony Point, Ferry Rd at intersection of East River Rd at the hot dog stand, whole Old Bedell House footprint that is open and you could put a Lodge in there and it would be a fantastic draw to that section.

**Assignment for next meeting:**

Refer to page 8 in the CPL Community Outreach Plan handout – revision of vision statements, CPL wait for email comments and suggestions from committee members. In May want to sign off on outreach plan, and we will be at the midpoint of our community profile, need to start building community profile piece – distribute first draft of same next month, and will need to finish community profile between May and June.

VIII. NEXT MEETING: Meeting # 11

Wednesday, May 10th, at 7:00 pm.

VI. ADJOURNMENT:

A motion was made by Marion / Betty to **ADJOURN** at 9:05 pm.

**Ayes:** All in favor. Motion carried.

Respectfully submitted,

Jacqueline McGinty

Jacqueline McGinty
LRPC Recording Secretary

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