

LPC Meeting #1

November 1, 2017, New Rochelle City Hall, 3:00pm

Mayor Bramson opened the meeting with introductory remarks and welcome. Marsha Gordon also provided introductory remarks. LPC members, City staff, State staff and VHB staff introduced themselves and which organization, business, or community they represent.

David Quart of VHB provided an overview of the project team and the role of the consultants.

Sarah Crowell from the Department of State, discussed the role of the LPC and State involvement. She also spoke about the Code of Conduct for the LPC (attached to minutes) and asked each LPC member to sign the document.

Joshua Hunn, from the Department of State, spoke more about the role of consulting team and the role of the NYS planners in the DRI process. He provided an overview of the DRI program and its intent. He stated the purpose of the program is to identify projects for the 9.7 million dollars of State funding with the intention of identifying projects costing more than 9.7 million dollars while identifying other funding sources for these projects to act as leverage. Mr. Hunn provided more details on the DRI process and discussed the key ingredients to a successful project. He provided an overview of vision, goals, and strategies that will come out of this process. He further discussed the types of projects that can be funded through the DRI and emphasized that projects should be ready to be designed and built.

Meghan Taylor, from Empire State Development, spoke about other communities successfully using DRI funds for revolving loan/grant programs.

Mr. Quart discussed the timeline for the DRI process.

Mayor Bramson read the draft vision statement that was based off the City's DRI application.

New Rochelle seeks to forge stronger physical, economic, and social links between the Lincoln Avenue Corridor and our burgeoning downtown. Through positive commercial, residential, recreational, and cultural development and revitalization, we will provide enhanced and equitable access to job opportunities, green space, human services, and multi-modal transportation, including safe and attractive pedestrian connections between the Lincoln Avenue Corridor and the downtown. This strategy of inclusive growth and prosperity will accelerate and leverage timely private and government investments in a fashion that simultaneously benefits residents of the Lincoln Avenue Corridor and of New Rochelle as a whole.

There was agreement among LPC members that the vision statement was acceptable as written.

Luiz Aragon, Commissioner of Development in New Rochelle, provided a presentation on the DRI boundary, the DRI application, current projects under construction or recently built. He also described the initial list of projects that are considered in the application and compiled by the City:

- Green Garage
- Black Box Theater and Art Education Center

- Coworking Incubator
- Train Station Gateway
- Burling Triangle Open Space
- MobileNR Phase II
- Complete Streets on Lincoln Avenue
- The Linc
- Open Space Opportunities
- Development Opportunities (116 Guion Street/Boys and Girls Club Revitalization, 420 North Avenue, and 71 Lincoln Avenue)
- Lincoln Park Master Plan

Mr. Quart then reviewed draft goals which were based on the DRI application:

Goal 1: Expand and enhance multi-modal access to employment, cultural, and recreational resources by improving the safety, accessibility, and appearance of the streets between and within the Lincoln Avenue Corridor and the downtown, and by facilitating greater regional access through the New Rochelle Transit Center.

Goal 2: Build a healthier and more enjoyable community by creating new accessible public open space and by improving existing local parks and recreational uses.

Goal 3: Spur beneficial economic development by creating a positive investment climate that can attract private and public capital for mixed-use growth, including residential, commercial, institutional, and community service facilities.

Goal 4: Preserve the socio-economic diversity of New Rochelle by encouraging mixed-income residential growth at varying levels of affordability.

Goal 5: Enhance the cultural, artistic and historic assets of the community in a manner that reflects and celebrates the unique heritage and diversity of New Rochelle.

The committee was agreeable to the draft goals and will reach out to Mr. Aragon with additional questions or comments. Draft goals will be sent to committee members.

Mr. Quart discussed next steps in the DRI process including the Downtown Profile and Assessment and the Community Engagement Plan. Mayor Bramson suggested forming two subcommittees for public engagement and projects, and identifying volunteers to be community ambassadors. The following LPC members volunteered for subcommittees:

Community Engagement Plan Subcommittee

Councilmember Jared Rice

Kwamaine Dixon

Leslie Gaskin

Yadira Ramos-Herbert

Iris Rosario

Nancy Street

Project Subcommittee

Whitney Barrat

Nanette Bourne

Tom Carey

Ralph DiBart

Sarah Dodds-Brown

Clive Henry

Mondaire Jones

Sarah Jones-Maturo

Hugh Price

Nancy Street

Ambassador

Bridget Gibbons

Martha Lopez

LPC Comments

The LPC members asked questions and provided input throughout the meeting. Below are specific comments:

- Forward an agenda to the LPC before each LPC meeting.
- Provide a more detailed timeline of the DRI process to the LPC.
- Incorporate Lincoln Avenue Task Force recommendations.
- There is a lack of daytime population in the DRI Area, there should be discussion of bringing an office tenant to anchor in the area.

The meeting was then opened to the public.

Public Comments

- There is concern in the community that the Lincoln Avenue Corridor will not benefit from the DRI projects.

- The Lincoln Avenue Corridor contains religious institutions that are important to the community. These institutions should be involved in the DRI process.
- Public meetings should be held in the evening to be more accessible to the community.
- Public meetings should be held in the community, within the DRI Area.
- The DRI process should include the history of the Lincoln Avenue Corridor.