Meeting Summary
Village of Lindenhurst NY Forward
Public Workshop #2
Lindenhurst Middle School Gymnasium
October 10, 2023
7:00-9:00 PM

The key objective of this workshop was to present proposed Lindenhurst New York Forward (NYF) projects for public comment and weigh-in, in order to inform ongoing project evaluations.

Approximately 50 members of the public were in attendance.

I. Welcome

Jim Morgo, Co-Chair of the Lindenhurst Local Planning Committee (LPC), started the meeting with an introduction of the NYF process and the LPC's role. Susan Favate of BFJ Planning then kicked off the presentation by introducing the consultant team, NY State team, Village staff, and the LPC.

II. Review of NYF Program and Elements

Ms. Favate explained that NYF is an outgrowth of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) program, launched by New York State in 2016 to improve the vitality of urban centers across the State. The Village of Lindenhurst is one of two communities in Long Island selected for NYF, each receiving awards of \$4.5 million. Each community is led by a consultant team who works with Village staff and the LPC to guide the planning process, develop projects to recommend to the State, and document a Strategic Investment Plan.

Ms. Favate described the following goals to be achieved through the NYF process:

- Enhance downtown living and quality of life
- Create an active downtown with a mix of uses
- Provide diverse employment opportunities for a variety of skill sets and salary levels
- Create diverse housing options for all income levels
- Provide enhanced public spaces that serve those of all ages and abilities
- Encourage the reduction of greenhouse emissions
- Grow the local property tax base

The planning process includes the following phases:

- Vision and Goals: Refine the community's future vision, establish priorities, and gather input.
- Opportunities and Challenges: Understand the community's unique characteristics and key opportunities.
- Project Identification and Evaluation: Identify, review, and evaluate potential projects.
- Project Recommendations: Recommend projects that align with the public's goals.

Ms. Favate presented an overview of the NYF timeline, noting the upcoming final LPC meeting (10/24/2023) and opportunities for public input through the online survey.

Suzanne Goldberg of BFJ Planning shared a map of the Lindenhurst NYF boundary developed with input from the LPC. The NYF boundary captures the area surrounding LIRR station, the commercial corridors of Hoffman and Wellwood Avenues, and the area surrounding these major thoroughfares.

Ms. Goldberg of BFJ Planning then gave an overview of past and upcoming public engagement opportunities, including the final LPC meeting on October 24, 2023, and the online public survey open until November 3, 2023. She also provided a summary of key findings from the "Ideas Wall," an online engagement exercise launched in July and closed in August. Main themes gathered from the "Ideas Wall" focused on improving connectivity, pedestrian/bike safety, retail diversity, and public art. Ms. Goldberg invited attendees to share the public survey. The objective is to gain public input on each of the projects. The survey can be accessed via www.tinyurl.com/LindenhurstNYFSurvey.

III. Vision

Ms. Goldberg explained that the purpose of developing Downtown Vision, Goals, and Strategies is to move from a vision that guides the process, to action-oriented goals to move toward the vision, to revitalization strategies that are discrete, measurable actions required to achieve a goal.

<u>Lindenhurst NYF Downtown Vision:</u>

Lindenhurst, a close-knit, coastal South Shore community that has drawn generations of residents to raise their families, start businesses, and enjoy small-town amenities, has experienced an influx of investment and activity that is breathing new life into its downtown. Through strategic public and private investments, the Village will build on its rich history and recent momentum to create a vibrant, attractive, and walkable community known throughout the region as a premier dining, entertainment, and shopping destination for locals and visitors alike.

IV. Goals & Proposed Projects

Ms. Goldberg gave an overview of the eligible and ineligible projects for NYF funding, as well as project evaluation criteria.

Eligible projects include:

- New Development &/or Rehabilitation of Existing Downtown Buildings
- Public Improvement Projects
- Small Project Fund
- Branding & Marketing

Ineligible projects include:

- Planning Activities
- Operations & Maintenance
- Pre-Award Costs

- Property Acquisition
- Training & Other Program Expenses
- Expenses Related to Existing Programs

Project Evaluation Criteria:

- Alignment with State and Local Goals: NYF State Goals
- Catalytic Effect
- Project Readiness
- Eligible Project Type
- · Cost Effectiveness
- Co-Benefits

Ms. Goldberg explained that the LPC has decided to require a minimum "match" of 33% from project sponsors for private projects. This means that, for all private projects, NYF funding must be no more than 67% of the total cost per project. The matching requirement for non-profits will be decided by the LPC at the final meeting. Ms. Goldberg also noted that for the potential Small Project Fund, the LPC has decided that NYF funding must be no more than 50% of the total cost per project.

Mark Freker of BFJ Planning described an overview of the Lindenhurst NYF Proposed Projects, both public and private. Mr. Freker gave a summary of each of the projects organized by goal. Refer to the workshop <u>presentation slides</u> for graphics that correspond to each proposed project.

Downtown Goal #1:

Enhance Downtown Lindenhurst's connection to the rest of the Village and to the region, while creating a safe, comfortable walking and biking environment.

Goal #1 Potential Projects:

- Create the Lindenhurst Greenway/Walking Trail
 - Create a Greenway/Walking Trail to better connect Village Park to the LIRR Station.
 Improve existing pedestrian infrastructure and expand walkways through the Heling Blvd. median and the Village commuter parking lot along the creek.
 - Route includes existing Village Park pathway. This portion could be enhanced with new lighting and landscaping.
 - Create a meandering path in the Heling Blvd median, including benches, waste receptacles, landscaping.
 - Connect Heling Blvd median with crosswalks to the north and south; Add striped parking spaces along median perimeter.
 - Create walkway through western municipal commuter parking lot; Connect to existing sidewalk at community bulletin board.
 - Restore plaza at north side of East Hoffman Ave, east of Heling Creek: Remove overgrown vegetation, add benches.
 - o Future phases could connect to Firemen's Memorial Park and Neguntatogue Park

- Improve Streetscapes and the Pedestrian Environment Hoffman & Wellwood Aves
 - Complete a series of streetscape enhancement projects along Hoffman and Wellwood Avenues that focus on improving pedestrian safety, connectivity, and the overall aesthetics of both corridors.
 - Potential improvements include:
 - New traffic signal or flashing pedestrian beacon at W. Hoffman/S. Broadway, with enhanced crosswalks.
 - Work with MTA to beautify/activate plaza areas at Hoffman/Wellwood intersection and at the LIRR station (i.e., benches, waste receptacles, bike racks, planters, wayfinding signage, public art).
 - Improve crosswalk at Hoffman Ave Travis St.
 - Connect The Wel to LIRR Station with a new midblock High Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK).
 - Replace missing street trees along Hoffman Ave.
 - Rehabilitate sidewalk brickwork on North Wellwood; Replace trees and install new tree grates.
 - Add wayfinding signage on both corridors.
 - Create walkway from N. Wellwood to Village parking lots at rear of Belfast.
 - Improve walkway to parking behind Firehouse (lighting, potential for public art).
 - Upgrade benches, waste receptacles, and planters as needed.

Downtown Goal #2:

Cultivate a supportive environment for local businesses and beautify the Downtown area as an attractive place to visit and explore.

Goal #2 Potential Projects:

- Expand and Enhance Village Square
 - Expand and redesign Village Square to bolster the quality of public space available in Downtown Lindenhurst.
 - Acquire and demolish courthouse building to expand park area by ~4,750 sf.
 Acquisition of site would be supported by other funding.
 - Expansion would significantly improve programming and activity opportunities.
 - Construct stage area, restrooms, concession stands.
 - Replace/upgrade benches, waste receptacles, planters.
 - Reinforce and upgrade the pedestrianized area of East Hoffman to further maximize public space.
 - Design scenarios: Constrained versus unconstrained.
- Enhance Belfast Gastro Pub 101-105 N Wellwood Ave
 - Enhance the existing dining patio on Hoffman Ave. with a more structurally-sound, aesthetic design: new roof, sliding glass panels that would open to the street.
 - Project also includes the provision of 9/11 memorial plaques that would be set within the sidewalk around the patio area.

- Project is contingent on the Village allowing Belfast's continued access to the right-ofway (sidewalk space).
- Develop Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial Building 50 E Hoffman Ave
 - Redevelop the currently vacant 4.65-acre former Waldbaums property into a mixeduse property that includes:
 - Up to 172 units with a mix of studios and 1-bdrms, mostly 2-bdrm (mix is flexible).
 - May incorporate workforce housing component based on funding requirements.
 - 5,000 sf grocery market.
 - Community space for building residents.
 - Potential public-realm improvements include:
 - Architectural screening of structured parking.
 - Landscaping, streetscaping, and lighting improvements along entire Hoffman frontage of site.
 - Applicant of open to coordinate site design with the Village Sq. Park improvements.
 - Other funding (\$68.75M) includes mix of bank financing, developer equity, and potential IDA incentives.
- Upgrade Facades at 197-201 S Wellwood Ave
 - Update and enhance the façade of a 4-unit building to create a more uniform look that adds to the quality of the S. Wellwood streetscape.
 - Resurface existing facade, ideally with brick.
 - Add energy efficient windows and doors.
 - Upgrade signage and lighting that are in line with existing streetscape.
- Expand Second Floor Office Space at 175 S Wellwood Ave
 - Add 2nd floor to building to support a financial advisory business expansion that will accommodate a new partner. Scope includes interior finishes and exterior details, such as adding cornice.
 - This expansion is proposed as a way for this growing business to remain on S.
 Wellwood the owner wants to stay local but cites a lack of local office spaces available for rent.
- Small Project Fund
 - Local Program Administrator Village/BID
 - \$300,000 max. total fund allotment (per State requirements)
 - Timing: After NYS funding is awarded and contracted; separate application process (2024)
 - Eligible Activities:
 - Façade enhancements
 - Signage and building lighting (consider existing BID signage program/fund)
 - Building renovation improvements to commercial or mixed-use spaces (including interior fit-out)
 - Business assistance (equipment or machinery)
 - Accessibility Improvements

- Sustainability Improvements
- Matching Requirement
 - Must be no less than 50% of the total cost per project.
- Initial Guideline on Total Project Costs
 - \$20,000 Min. / \$100,000 Max.

Downtown Goal #3:

Strengthen Lindenhurst's arts and historic assets to establish the Village as a regional cultural destination.

Goal #3 Potential Projects:

- Revitalize Irmisch Historical Park
 - Complete Park improvements to preserve the existing historical buildings (Old Village Hall Museum; Railroad Depot & Freight) while promoting this public space as a community destination and area for passive recreation.
 - Curb perimeter of park and add sidewalk along roadways.
 - Add crosswalk with flashing pedestrian beacon across S. Broadway (northerly park area).
 - Potential to add 1-2 ADA parking spaces along S. Broadway side.
 - Replace chain link fencing with more decorative option.
 - Complete building improvements and renovations i.e., Old Village Hall
 Museum facade and windows.
 - Add lighting to illuminate park features.
 - Improve southern end of park with landscaping and seating options.
- Renovate and Expand Babylon Citizens Council on the Arts (BACCA)
 - Renovate the BACCA multi-use arts center, including building improvements and signage to improve visibility, create additional rehearsal and practice spaces, and update interior spaces. As a nonprofit, BACCA offers affordable space to artists/performers.
 - Upgrade N. Wellwood facade for a more welcoming entry (resurface facade, add new windows and doors).
 - Interior renovations: box office, kitchenette, and bathroom.
 - New flooring in main space.
 - Theatrical lighting/sound upgrades.
 - One-story rear expansion to provide more practice space, allowing two community groups to use the space at a time
- Create a Public Arts Project Fund
 - Create a fund to support public arts projects in Downtown Lindenhurst, administered by BACCA.
 - Increase opportunities for community engagement and enjoyment.
 - Implement aesthetic and experiential improvements to existing spaces.
 - The fund would focus on murals but other public art (i.e., sculpture) could be considered.

 Early candidate locations include under the LIRR tracks at the Wellwood-Hoffman intersection and by the LIRR station. Potential private property locations would also be identified.

Mr. Freker concluded the project descriptions with a project cost summary. The total NYF Funding request based on the current project cost estimates is \$6,140,200 (subject to change). The total NYF Funding Request for proposed public projects is \$3,450,000 (56% total NYF request. The total NYF Funding Request for proposed private projects is \$2,690,000 (44% total NYF request). The total project cost estimate is within the \$6-8 million range requested by NYS for inclusion in the Strategic Investment Plan. Although the Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) will be submitted to the State in December 2023, the State will ultimately make final funding decisions in early 2024.

V. What's Next?

Ms. Favate described the Open House exercise, which invited attendees to provide feedback/comments on the boards located around the room with descriptions of each project, organized by goal.



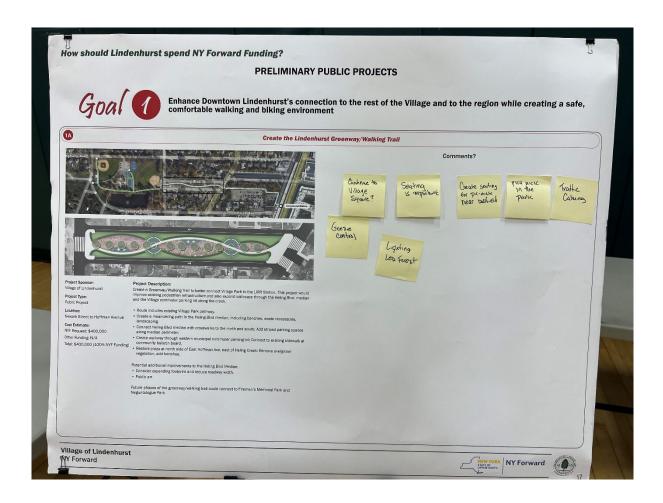


The following section summarizes comments from the public that were received at each station:

Project 1A: Create the Lindenhurst Greenway/Walking Trail:

Comments were supportive of this project with an emphasis on increasing seating.

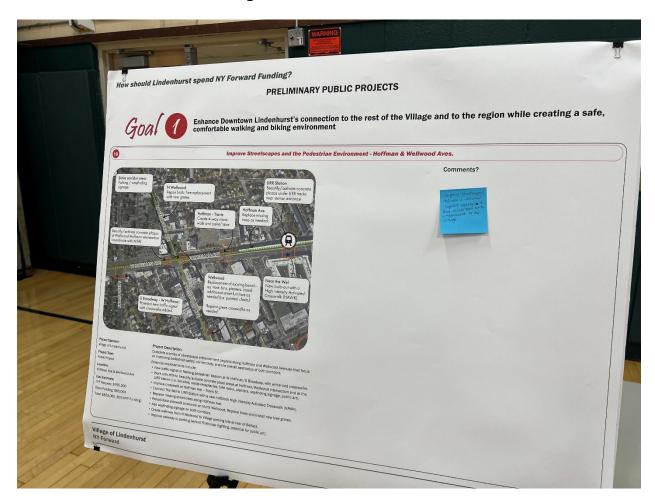
- Geese control
- Lighting LED Forest
- Seating is important
- Continue to Village Square?
- Create seating for picnics near ballfield



Project 1B: Improve Streetscapes and the Pedestrian Environment - Hoffman & Wellwood Aves:

Feedback was supportive of this project and highlighted the need for pedestrian and bike safety.

• Improve streetscapes on Hoffman and Wellwood Ave. Improve safety and bike access from North Lindenhurst to the Village.



Project 2A: Expand and Enhance Village Square

Comments were generally supportive of the expansion of Village Square, with concerns expressed regarding the noise from LIRR and a proposed café's competition with existing local businesses.

- Stage further away from tracks- noise and brake dust from trains
- Fantastic idea
- May be positive to consider the gazebo park's historic charm in design elements
- Public seating with tables is a good idea
- Concession for use during events is a good idea, but a café will discourage foot traffic/shopping through the downtown with local cafes already existing in the community
- This is the least important project. We need a local grocery store for residents and the elderly
- Train noise is an issue
- Great to join gazebo park to MTA property more permanently
- Lots of open space/flex space
- Could accommodate big events
- Preserving design aesthetic
- Café could compete with existing businesses
- Concessions are more flexible than café





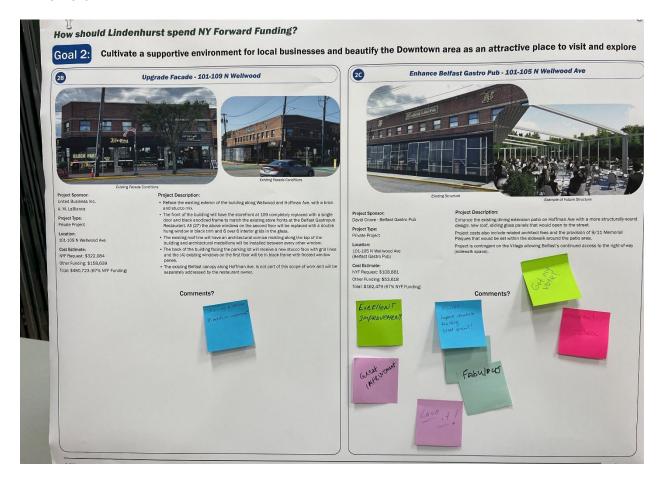
Project 2B: Upgrade Façade- 101-109 N Wellwood

• 101-109 N Wellwood needs an improvement

Project 2C: Enhance Belfast Gastro Pub- 101-105 N Wellwood

Comments were supportive of these enhancements.

- Excellent improvement
- Great improvement
- Love it
- Fabulous
- Improve the whole building- great project
- Got my vote
- Excellent Idea



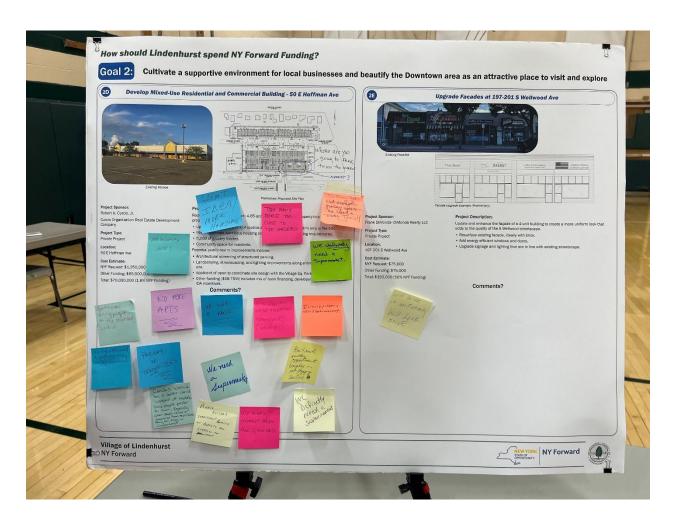
Project 2D: Develop Mixed-Use Residential and Commercial Building- 50 E Hoffman Ave

Comments were mixed for this project, with significant support for a new grocery store/market and some opposition to new apartments.

- Apartments bring people to the downtown. Love it
- We definitely need a grocery store/supermarket in Lindenhurst
- Fairway or Trader Joes
- No more apartments
- Condos would be a better choice instead of rentals. Some people prefer to own. Especially when people retire and downsize from their home so they can stay in Lindenhurst
- We need a market/supermarket
- Please ensure sufficient parking on property for 2 vehicles per apartment
- We need a market larger than 5,000 sq ft
- We don't need another apartment complex
- Would prefer a new supermarket
- Don't need another apartment complex
- Too many apartments, not enough grocery space. We need a Trader Joes
- Too many people too close to the gazebo
- Absolutely no
- Great idea! More housing

Project 2E: Upgrade Facades at 197-201 S Wellwood Ave

• It will give it uniformity and will look nice



Project 3A: Revitalize Irmisch Historical Park

Comments were in favor of revitalizing Irmisch Historical Park as a space to gather with historical significance.

- It's important to have space for the youth
- Area must be completely fenced in to avoid hanging out after dark
- It will be great, very attractive
- Will be well-utilized historical gem once revitalized



Project 3A: Renovate and Expand BACCA

Comments were very supportive of this project and acknowledge BACCA's asset as an arts anchor in the community in need of a more welcoming space.

- Important- BACCA needs more space
- Great addition
- Space to perform art
- Façade improvements needed
- Much needed space for the local theater community- many groups need space to perform
- Fabulous space for art and entertainment. Expansion desperately needed
- Façade needs to be more welcoming and inviting
- Façade needs a face lift
- You don't know that there is a playhouse in there

Project 3B: Create a Public Arts Project Fund

Comments were supportive, especially in relation to murals and improvements under LIRR.

- Great idea cleaning under tracks
- Yes, more art
- · Would really brighten the area
- Love public murals, make Lindy beautiful
- Been looking at ugly LIRR trestle for too long! Needs art and beautification

