

Date: August 8, 2023

Project Name: Lindenhurst NY Forward  
Subject: Local Planning Committee Meeting #3

Meeting Location: Rainbow Center (Senior Citizens Center), 293 Buffalo Ave.  
Meeting Date: August 8, 2023  
Meeting Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

Participants: **Local Planning Committee**

RJ Renna (Co-Chair)  
Sammy Chu  
Marian Conway  
Robert Sweeney  
Franklin Cruz  
Jason Kontakis  
Liz Mirarchi  
Alice Cromarty  
Joann Boettcher  
Matt Gaudio  
Pat Corcoran

*Not present: Jim Morgo (Co-Chair), Sharon Badri-Persaud, Lisa Kropp, Sara Pesserillo, Anthony Ferlito*

**New York State**

Kevin Garrett, Department of State (DOS)  
Rachel Bruce, DOS  
Jenna DiMarco, Empire State Development (ESD)  
Denise Zani, ESD

**Consultant Team**

Susan Favate, Principal, BFJ Planning  
Mark Freker, Associate, BFJ Planning  
Suzanne Goldberg, Planner, BFJ Planning

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The purpose of this meeting was to introduce potential NYF projects to the Local Planning Committee (LPC) and gather initial feedback and questions on submitted Open Call applications. The presentation is posted on the [Lindenhurst NYF Website](#).

### Introductions and NYF Code of Conduct

- Members of the public were reminded that LPC meetings are working sessions, and there is an opportunity for the public to share comments at the end of the meeting or submit comments online at [www.LindenhurstNYF.com](http://www.LindenhurstNYF.com).
- Co-Chair RJ Renna introduced himself and the NY Forward process.
- Susan Favate of BFJ Planning introduced the consultant and New York State team.
- RJ Renna read aloud the LPC preamble for disclosure and recusal.
- The following LPC members recused themselves from discussing projects:
  - Alice Cromarty: BACCA Renovations, BACCA Public Seating, BID Utility Poles
  - Joann Boettcher: BACCA Renovations, BACCA Public Seating
  - Liz Mirarchi: BACCA Renovations, BACCA Public Seating
  - Jason Kontakis: BID Utility Poles
  - Matt Gaudio: BID Utility Poles, The Holy Black, Antique Carousel, Fireman's Park Redesign
- Ms. Favate presented an overview of the NYF timeline. This is the third out of five LPC meetings. The second public workshop on October 10<sup>th</sup> will include more clarity on project proposals.

### Community Engagement Update

- Ms. Favate gave a recap of Public Workshop #1, held on July 18, 2023 at the Village of Lindenhurst Firehouse. Approximately 40 people attended the workshop. Topics included:
  - Overview of the NYF program
  - Identification of needs, challenges, and opportunities that affect revitalization
  - Solicitation of project ideas
  - Interactive component to solicit community feedback on vision, goals, strategies, and opportunities
- Attendees shared following project ideas during the open house activity:
  - Goal #1: Enhanced Connectivity
    - Public art, greenery, and improved maintenance around and underneath the LIRR station
    - Wayfinding signage
  - Goal #2: Pedestrian/Bike Safety
    - Improved lighting, crosswalks, bike infrastructure
  - Goal #3: Beautification
    - Façade improvements
    - Public realm improvements
  - Goal #4: Arts/Culture
    - Murals/public art, performance spaces, programming/education
- Ms. Favate stated that the Ideas Wall will open for submissions through the end of August. Posts can be viewed at [LindenhurstNYF.com](http://LindenhurstNYF.com) OR [bfjplanning.mysocialpinpoint.com/lindenhurstnyf](https://bfjplanning.mysocialpinpoint.com/lindenhurstnyf).
- Comments were consistent what has been shared by LPC members and at Public Workshop #1. Users expressed interested in improving connectivity, pedestrian/bike safety, retail diversity, and public art.

### Discussion of Goals and Strategies

- Ms. Favate explained that the submission of Open Call applications creates opportunity to revisit/refine goals and strategies to ensure that potential projects can be placed within an appropriate goal and strategy.
- Based on responses from the Public Workshop, the consultant team suggested merging Goal #1 (connectivity) and Goal #2 (walking and biking environment) to reduce redundancies. The team also suggested expanding Goal #3 (beautification) to better reflect support for business improvements and expansions, rather than just beautification (i.e. interior improvements as well as exterior).
- Proposed 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.
- Proposed Downtown Goal #2: Cultivate a supportive environment for local businesses and beautify the Downtown area as an attractive place to visit and explore.
- Proposed Downtown Goal #3: Strengthen Lindenhurst's arts and historic assets to establish the Village as a regional cultural destination.

### Project Evaluation Criteria and "Homework" Handout

- Ms. Favate explained that the objective of this discussion is to provide LPC members the opportunity to offer guidance on the potential economic impact and community benefits that each project could provide. She encouraged LPC members to ask the following questions when evaluating the proposed NYF projects:
  - Does this project meet the State and Local NYF Goals?
  - Does the project have the potential to create a catalytic effect?
  - Is the project ready to be implemented?
  - Is the project cost effective?
  - Does the project have co-benefits?
- The projects should be evaluated on the following five criteria:
  - Alignment with State and Local Goals: NYF State Goals
  - Catalytic Effect
  - Eligible Project Type
  - Cost Effectiveness
  - Co-Benefits
- Mark Freker of BFJ Planning introduced the LPC "homework" for initial project review.
- The Project Review handout can be used to provide notes, comments, and questions for each project. The comments should help the project team follow-up with applicants.
- Mr. Freker asked the LPC to submit their notes to the project team by August 23<sup>rd</sup>, two weeks before LPC #4.

### Discussion of Potential NYF Projects

- Ms. Favate introduced the discussion of potential NYF projects. She reminded the LPC that Lindenhurst has a limited amount of funding through the NYF program and not every project will be funded, while some related projects may be combined.
- Ms. Favate explained that during the discussion of projects, LPC members with conflicts of interest may provide factual information, but otherwise must not advocate on behalf of their own projects. LPC members must recuse themselves from the project selection process with regard to their own projects.
- In terms of creating a target for percent NYF funding, Ms. Favate stated that there are no programmatic maximum percent NYF funding requirements with the exception of a small project fund (no more than 75%

NYF funding of the total cost per project). However, the LPC can decide whether they require or target a maximum percent NYF funding from project sponsors.

- Projects should have financing commitments largely secured or be able to demonstrate a clear path to securing sufficient financing. It is strongly encouraged that all projects, especially private projects, use non-NYF funds that leverage requested public funding.
- An LPC member asked if the LPC could create different percent NYF funding requirements dependent on the project type and/or goals. Ms. Favate responded that this would be allowed.
- Ms. Favate then shared an overview of the total responses submitted during the Open Call for Project Proposals thus far. The Open Call consisted of:
  - 36 total project submissions (5 public project submissions and 31 private/non-profit submissions)
  - Wide range of creative project types: façade improvements, streetscape/greenway design, murals and public art
  - NYF funding requests range from \$4,700 to \$2,000,000
  - Total NYF request from Open Call projects is about \$7.3M, leveraging an additional \$5.2M, for a total investment of nearly \$12.5M (Not all project submissions indicated a cost amount).
- Discussion topics for the LPC included:
  - Which projects will have the greatest impact on downtown economic development?
  - Can some projects be combined?
  - What is the NYF need? NYF funds can be used to make up a financing gap, but the applicant must demonstrate need—if the project could proceed without NYF, then it's not a good use of State funds.
  - Do project sponsors have the capacity to implement the project?
  - In addition to the State's minimum thresholds, the LPC could consider other requirements.
- Ms. Favate introduced the initial NYF evaluation project categories as following:
  - Strong NYF Projects
    - Projects that may stand a good chance of being included in the plan and ultimately funded by the state. Note that this categorization does not guarantee inclusion in the plan—that decision is up to the LPC.
  - Potential NYF Projects with Questions
    - Projects that are likely eligible but raise questions about project readiness, private leverage, site control, etc. Sponsor's response to preliminary questions could make each of these projects stronger or may demonstrate that they're not quite ready for NYF.
  - Project Ideas That are Not Eligible or Ready for NYF.
    - Projects with ineligible activities, such as ongoing programming expenses or removable equipment.
    - Some projects are potentially eligible for NYF funding, but there are significant questions/issues, such as site control, capacity to implement, etc.
    - Some of these projects could be suitable to be implemented through the Small Project Fund (max. \$300,000)
    - Kevin Garrett of DOS stated that many projects requested 100% funding but that can be altered through follow-up.
- Throughout the next section of the presentation, Mr. Freker and Ms. Goldberg of BFJ Planning alternated presenting a summary of each Open Call submission. The notes below reflect the LPC discussion. More details regarding each project submission is included within the presentation slides.

LPC Discussion of Open Call submissions:

- Tesla Rideshare- 3-Month Pilot
  - There's already a taxi service, would this project take away from an existing business?
  - The project sponsors are operating in East Hampton already. This could be a solution for parking and traffic issues. Since these would be free rides, the service could benefit local restaurants and businesses, while also preventing driving while under the influence.
  - Additionally, since there is an aging population in Lindenhurst, this project could also benefit seniors who need assistance travelling to community spaces and appointments.
- East Hoffman Improvements
  - Since Hoffman Ave is a County road, there needs to be County coordination. The County has not expressed interest in improving Hoffman Ave using their funding, it might be more effective to implement these improvements through NYF funding.
- West Hoffman- Broadway Improvements
  - This intersection is a speedway and needs traffic calming measures to provide a safe means of egress of off Broadway. This would also help support the businesses expanding and flourishing on West Hoffman.
- Lindenhurst Greenway/Village of Lindenhurst Greenway
  - Greenways are a consistent theme throughout these proposals. There is potential to combine these projects.
- Walking Trail- Newark St. to Hoffman Ave.
  - Intended to be for both bicycles and pedestrians for North/South travel.
  - The advantage of this route is that it could lead to future routes East/West and extend across the entire Village to the waterfront.
- North Wellwood Ave Improvements
  - This project could support the continuation of ongoing improvements on S Wellwood Ave.
  - The intention is to plant trees that do not cause structural damage to the businesses, sidewalks, and roadways.
- Sculpture Park and Greenway
  - People park on the stretch of Heling Blvd, and taking away parking here might impact the neighbors.
  - There could be a coordinated effort to combine parking and pedestrian improvements on Heling Blvd.
- BACCA Public Seating
  - Applicant stated this could be good for facilitating conversations.
  - This is not specifically a BACCA project, but could rather be a partnership with the Village.
  - West Hampton has added seating with bump-outs.
- Village Square Improvements & Expansion
  - Gazebo is very well-utilized and the heart and soul of the Village. It needs a bigger footprint for large celebrations and gatherings. This could be a great space for the future of Lindenhurst residents.
  - There is currently no Village-owned space that honors veterans. One of the visions for this space could be honoring Lindenhurst veterans with a monument.
- Antique Carousel
  - The structure could be indoor during the winter and opened up in the summer.

- The Chamber of Commerce sponsored a carousel during the holiday season, and it was very successful. It is also somewhat historically relevant, since there was previously a carousel in Lindenhurst.
- This could be a unique attraction in the Village that would create a distinct identity.
- Village will need to confirm ownership of Hoffman Ave.
- BID Utility Poles
  - The utility poles surrounding the Waldbaum's site will need further consideration, since this site may be developed in the future.
- 175 S Wellwood- 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Expansion
  - This project needs clarity on whether the renovation would expand the current business or introduce new businesses to the space.
- 27A Brewing
  - This project needs clarity on property ownership.
- Island Kava- Exterior/Signage Improvements
  - The LPC discussed that this intersection would benefit from a traffic light there, which would increase foot traffic nearby.
- Ice Cream Shop
  - This property is located behind The Holy Black and is currently used as a construction office.
  - The applicant could help contribute to a safe, enjoyable environment on Bristol St.
- 100-102 S Wellwood Ave
  - This is an architecturally interesting building, and one of the only 3-story buildings in Lindenhurst.
- Lindenhurst Youth Center
  - New lighting could benefit middle schoolers who use the basketball courts.
- Knights of Columbus
  - Building renovations requires County coordination.
- The consultant team shared the following preliminary categorization of Open Call responses:
  - Strong NYF Projects
    - Village Square expansion/improvement.
    - Village streetscaping improvements (3 separate projects, could be combined with BACCA public seating, Village Park).
    - BACCA renovations
    - Public art project (including individual mural projects)
    - Greenway (incorporating 3 separate projects)
    - Irmisch Historical Park revitalization
    - 197-201 South Wellwood façade upgrades
  - Projects Not Eligible/Ready for NYF
    - Tesla rideshare
    - Shade Studio
    - Shop Lindenhurst Tax Program
  - Potential NYF Projects with Questions
    - 101- 109 North Wellwood façade upgrade
    - 175 South Wellwood second floor expansion
    - Carousel
    - Lindenhurst Youth Center

- Fireman's Park Redesign
- Utility pole removals
- Potential Small Project Fund Projects
  - Belfast Gastropub upgrades
  - Hunter & Thief facade
  - Knights of Columbus exterior work
  - 101-103 S. Travis St. driveway and parking lot repair
  - Sidelines Café façade improvement
  - Island Kava exterior/signage improvements
  - 27A Brewing façade and exterior upgrades
  - Breslau Brewery façade and heating/AC
  - 125A South Wellwood upgrades/renovations
  - 218 North Wellwood elevator
  - Ice cream shop renovations –168 North Wellwood
  - 100-102 South Wellwood rehab

### Next Steps

- Continue to revise list of preliminary projects, follow up with sponsors.
  - LPC to complete initial project evaluation handout by August 23rd. Submitted Project Forms will be shared via Google Drive for LPC review.
- Upcoming Public Events
  - LPC Meeting #4: September 12 (7-9PM, Rainbow Center)
  - LPC Meeting #5: October 24 (7-9PM, Rainbow Center)
  - Public Workshop #2: October 10TH, 7pm-9pm (Location TBD)

### Public Comments

- Some of the businesses are already doing well and NYF funding should go towards projects that benefit the entire community.
- Q: Was a project submitted for the block of storefronts with the Chase drive-through?
  - A: No. Applications have to be submitted by the property owner.
- Q: Can the BID form a committee with the LPC to ensure that the façade improvements are cohesive?
  - A: Yes, the next LPC meeting will focus on parameters for the Small Project Fund. The LPC can require the types of projects which are eligible for funding and a minimum and maximum amount.
  - Every project is contracted by the State to a specific sponsor, which could be the BID for the Small Project Fund.
- Q: Would any of these projects require Village building permits?
  - A: Yes, the application will require a description of all necessary approvals for implementation.