Village of Hamilton - NY Forward Local Planning Committee Meeting #1

Meeting Notes

Date/Time	June 2, 2023 / 2-4pm
Place:	The Hub - 20 Utica Street
LPC Attendees:	**Mayor Ruth Ann Loveless**, Co-Chair **Kipp Hicks**, Co-Chair, CNY REDC/ County IDA **Joanne Borfitz**, Colgate University **Bill Butler**, Five Trees HOA (via Zoom) **Reverend, Brooks Cato**, St. Thomas Episcopal Church (via Zoom) **Jeffrey Coakley**, Community Memorial Hospital (via Zoom) **Suzanne Collins**, Hamilton Food Cupboard **Dan Foust**, FOJO Café and Beans **Jocelyn Gavitt**, Partnership for Community Development (PCD) **Henry Howard**, Arts at the Palace **Samanthi Martinez**, Madison Lane Apartments; Village Trustee
LPC Not in Attendance:	**Bill Dowsland**, Hamilton Central School **Julie Dudrick**, Village Trustee, Colgate Upstate Institute **Brian Marks**, Hamilton Fire Department **Britty O'Connor**, Hamilton Business Alliance
State/Consultant Team Attendees:	**Lissa D'Aquanni**, New York State (NYS) Department of State (DOS) **Dan Kolinski**, Empire State Development (ESD) **Steve Kearney**, Stantec **Phil Schaeffing**, Stantec

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The Village of Hamilton's first NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC) meeting took place on Friday, June 2, 2023, at The Hub. The meeting's primary purpose was to introduce the NY Forward process and LPC responsibilities to committee members, review the Village's successful application, discuss opportunities and challenges, and review community engagement plans with the committee. Steve Kearney (SK) and Phil Schaeffing (PS) from Stantec presented the attached slideshow.

Welcome

- Mayor Ruth Ann Loveless welcomed LPC members and reminded them of the LPC code of conduct to always act in the public interest.

NY Forward Overview and Planning Process

- Steve Kearney outlined the goals of the NY Forward program for the $2.25 million awarded to the Village of Hamilton for project implementation in and near downtown.
- Phil Schaeffing described the approximately six-month planning process which will include five to six LPC meetings, two public meetings, and a NY Forward table at an upcoming local

event. The final product of the planning process will be a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP) for the Village, from which the State will select projects to be awarded implementation funding.

LPC Questions and Comments

- Who negotiates award contracts once projects are selected? State agencies such as ESD, HCR, DOS and others handle the language of agreements directly with project sponsors.
- What is the scope of the NYF boundary planned for the Village? The boundary is best kept to a compact, walkable size but there is no specific requirement for it (explored more in "Review of the NYF Boundary Discussion").
- What level of control does the Committee have over project details and contracts? The LPC will review information provided by project sponsors to the consultant team along with the team's analysis. The LPC does not have a role in contracts once the State makes the final award selections.
- It was noted that NY Forward awards are reimbursement-based funds.
- Will there be public outreach during the process? Yes, two public meetings, a project website, and a presence at a local event are included (explored more in "Public Engagement Discussion").

Hamilton NY Forward Application Highlight

- The key features of the Village's successful application for the NY Forward program were reviewed. Opportunities identified in it include the Village's connection with Colgate University; convenient driving access to cities such as Syracuse, Cortland, and Utica; and events throughout the year in the Village.

LPC Discussion

1. **Review of the NYF Boundary***
   ** The boundary discussed is included at the end of these meeting notes.*
   - It was suggested the boundary be extended further north along Utica Street toward the airport to include more sites in the commercial districts.
   - It was suggested the boundary be extended further northwest along Eaton Street.
   - It was suggested the boundary be extended further south of Lebanon Street.
   - It was noted the Village and the boundary are fairly linear North-South and attention should be focused on connecting/expanding the boundary more East-West.
   - The consensus was that the proposed boundary should be modified.

2. **Public Engagement Methods**
   - Public engagement is very important to the success of the planning process. LPC members suggested local events that could be used to promote NY Forward:
     - Symphoria! (07/06/23), live music events every Thursday (4-6 weeks), and the Farmer's Market (Saturdays, 9am-1pm) were initial public engagement ideas. The local Antique Fair was suggested as another option.

    - The Library and College bookstore were mentioned as key engagement areas for students.
- LPC members discussed methods of communication and public outreach:
    - The Mayor does a regular newsletter that can include information
    - Local utility bills have a newsletter section which could be used for outreach.
    - Nextdoor: Hamilton Community Board is a site widely used by residents.
    - QR codes were suggested as a way to best reach college students in the Village.
    - Overall it was agreed that student input was very important and key for the project.
    - Elderly, low income, and working class residents were identified as groups to which outreach needed to be focused
    - Concern was raised about ensuring that outreach methods are diverse to ensure a range of people participate and not just a few people's input are recorded.
    - Local church newsletters and bulletin boards could be used for wider outreach.
    - It was noted that there is confusion in the community regarding the NYF planning process and the NYSDOT project. There is a need to distinguish the two separate projects and better explain what each entails.
    - Comment was raised for attention to be directed towards gaining input from surrounding communities.
    - It was agreed that the NYF website should be integrated into the Village website for better community outreach and future communication.

3. **Open Call for Projects**
    - An Open Call for Projects form will be released soon and available for 6-8 weeks. Project sponsors will have the opportunity to meet with consultant team members during an "office hours" type event that will be announced.
        - Question was raised about the percentage of public vs private funding for private projects. It was noted that the LPC can determine if they want to set a matching requirement or maximum NY Forward funding request for private projects. In past rounds of the Downtown Revitalization Initiative, the maximum request was 40% of the total project cost.
        - Comment was noted on bridge loans as a safety net for prospective private projects.
        - Question was raised about whether the consultant team or the State help with finding project sponsors. It was noted that neither assists in finding prospective project sponsors. The State team is able to help with messaging and getting the word out.

4. **Local Opportunities and Challenges**
    - The Village is very walkable and the community is very engaged.
    - There isa lack of developer interest for new housing projects, in part due to our location to other cities.
    - Several under-utilized parcels were noted that could be potential project sites (ie. video store and laundromat)
    - The NYSDOT project for Route 12B and the five-way intersection is planned for construction in 2025. This timing may work out well for projects that receive NY Forward

funding if they get underway during that construction and are completed around the same time.

5. **LPC Logistics**
   - Availability of committee members:
     - Most members are available to meet in early evening around 4 or 5pm. Preference is to meet in-person with Zoom available for those who cannot attend.
   - Next meeting dates:
     - The second LPC Meeting will take place in early- to mid-July.
     - The first public meeting will be scheduled for late June.
     - Meeting dates will be added to the project website once they are confirmed.
6. **Public Comments**
   - No public comments were made.

The meeting adjourned at 3:50pm.

Please send questions, comments or corrections regarding the meeting notes to Phil Schaeffing (philip.schaeffing@stantec.com).

Stantec Consulting Services Inc.

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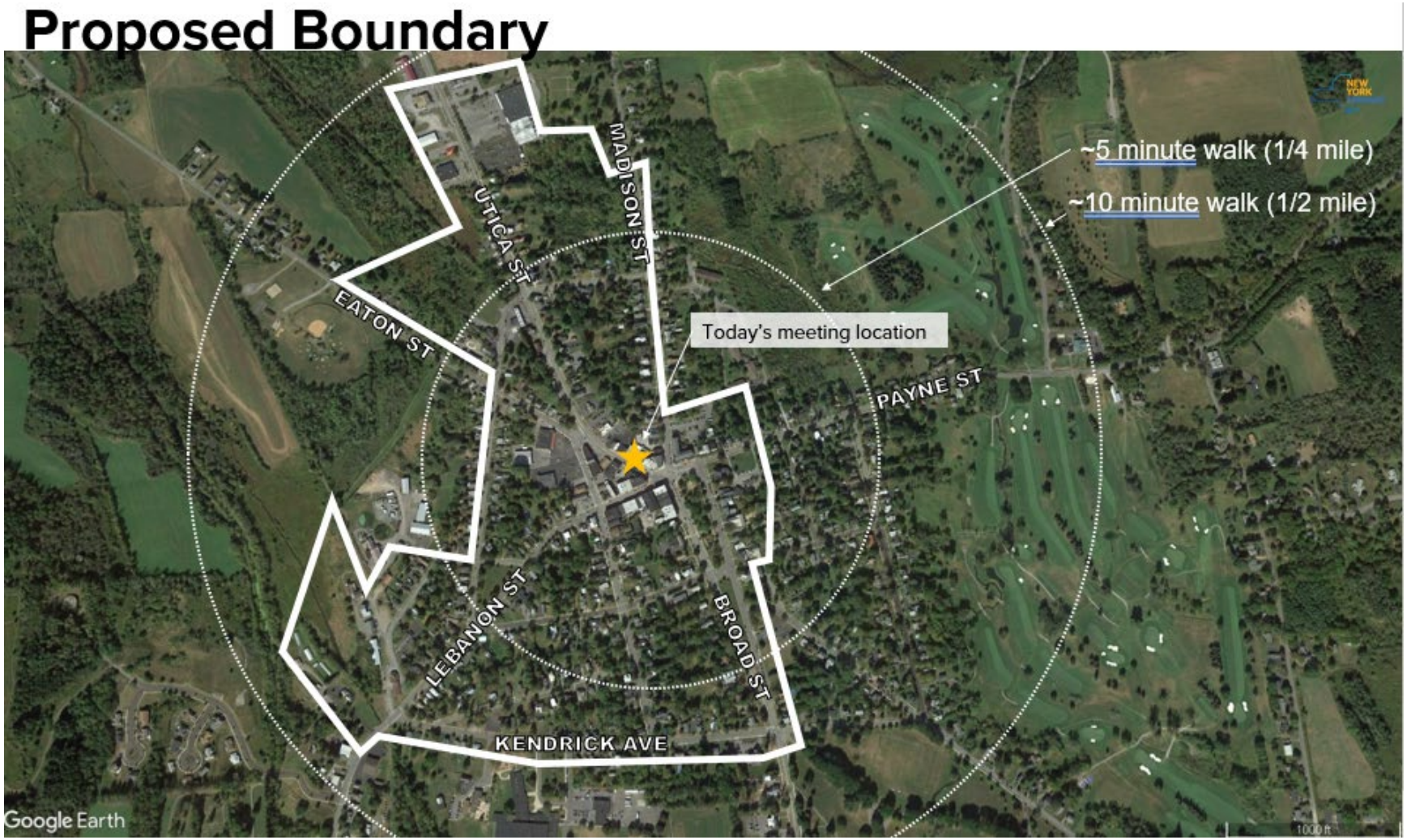
* Potential NY Forward boundary discussed during the LPC meeting. Several proposed changes were discussed.