

City of Port Jervis Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update

Community Participation Plan

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DRAFT



**Department
of State**

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City of Port Jervis Community Development Agency (PJCD A)

Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update

City of Port Jervis, Orange County, NY

Community Participation and Outreach Strategy

1.0 Introduction

As part of the implementation of the City's *2009 Delaware River Waterfront Revitalization Plan*, the City of Port Jervis seeks to update its Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Law, and other land use regulations in accordance with New York State law. Its intent is to modernize planning and zoning procedures and to further the quality of residential life in the City, support its tourism businesses, and maximize its commercial and industrial opportunities while at the same time protecting its heritage, environment, and natural resources.

A Comprehensive Plan, in its most simple sense, is an opportunity for the community to take stock of its current situation, to think about where it wants to go in the future, and to formulate ideas for how to get from here to there. The process is informed by previous plans and projects, data and information gathered about local and regional trends, and public input. To be successful, the plan must reflect the values and aspirations of the community, and must generate buy-in to assure that the plan's recommendations are implemented.

Zoning is the most important tool that communities in New York State have for implementing their Comprehensive Plans. Therefore, it is recommended that the City of Port Jervis update its zoning code to reflect the recommendations in the Comprehensive Plan as an immediate and successive step. As the Comprehensive Plan begins to take shape, we will evaluate the City's existing zoning to determine what components of the zoning will need to be amended to achieve the City's vision.

2.0 Scope and Considerations for Ongoing Discussions

In order to foster public participation throughout the code update process, the City will follow these guidelines:

- All community meetings will be publicized in advance, and open to the public.
- City staff, project consultant Barton & Loguidice (B&L) (and as needed, subcontractor Courtney Strong Inc.) will prepare and disseminate documents to the public regarding the comprehensive plan and zoning code update.
- Partner with a diverse group of organizations during the planning and development phase such as the groups listed in Section 6.0.
- The City has formed a Port Jervis Comprehensive Plan Committee (PJPC) to provide guidance

throughout the process. The Committee is composed of local and regional stakeholders, including representatives of State, county, and municipal agencies with jurisdiction over project activities or the project area, and non-governmental and community based organizations. Local members are expected to serve as liaisons for their fellow residents.

- Public comments will be welcomed throughout the process.

3.0 Organization Review and Finalization of the Public Participation Plan

During the project's startup phase, the consultant team of Barton & Loguidice, DPC (B&L) and its sub-consultant Courtney Strong, Inc. (CS) will facilitate a meeting with the PJPCPC. The purpose of this meeting is to refine and revise the identified objectives outlined in Section 4.0 below for both the current process of developing and adopting the updated Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code as well as long-term revitalization and future marketability of the City. Following the PJPCPC review of the public participation plan, the preliminary draft will be revised and provided to the PJPCPC, DOS, and PJCDA.

4.0 Draft Objectives for Public Involvement

The following draft objectives are set forth by the planning staff of B&L and CS:

- The outreach effort should be designed to engage a full range of stakeholders in the community including residents, business owners, elected representatives, and adjoining municipalities.
- The public should have notification of and easy access to project technical information, maps, and analyses.
- All involved agencies, including the City, should serve as a conduit throughout the process of the analysis, evaluation, and adoption process (including SEQRA).
- The PJPCPC should strive to solicit input from the broadest possible range of perspectives and interests in the community.
- Input should be solicited through a variety of technical and non-technical means and should be carefully considered and responded to in a timely manner.
- The public participation process should be approached in a way that enfranchises local residents and strengthens the sense of community.
- Public participation should establish the vision of the community and the updated Comprehensive Plan; enhance civic pride, and encourage future participation in the long-range decision making process for each area.
- The public should be encouraged to actively participate in the project and be given conduits to offer information, advice and input.

5.0 Committee Involvement in Public Participation

In order to maximize the project budget and to provide for grassroots support of the process, the PJCCPC should maximize the amount of participation from community groups and stakeholders in the study area by promoting awareness of public participation opportunities that will inform the plan. Creating a network of communication will engage the public in an objective manner and minimize biased or preconceived perceptions of the project. It will be important to provide these participants with a clear understanding of the purposes, goals, schedule, tasks and objectives of the project.

Initiation of the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Update will be governed by a PJCCPC to include members of the consultant team, key stakeholders identified, PJCCDA representatives, local residents, representatives from the City of Port Jervis and neighboring municipalities, and representatives from NYS DOS. Lisa Vasilakos is the primary project liaison from NYS DOS.

The PJCCPC will maintain direct liaison to the planning consultant through meetings, general communications and through contact with the identified project manager (Valerie Maginsky and David Bavoso). Ms. Maginsky and Mr. Bavoso will coordinate all activities with the PJCCPC and project consultants. The PJCCPC will be comprised of stakeholders in project area that will assist the planning consultant in enlisting the involvement of community members and volunteers from local organizations during public participation opportunities. The intent is to establish a grassroots perspective on all public outreach in securing cooperation of the media and newspapers and to put a neighborhood spin on press releases, newsletters, and workshops. The extent to which volunteer assistance will be solicited will be determined by the PJCCPC within the context of available resources, budget, and volunteer capabilities.

An important component of the PJCCPC will be recording and disseminating meeting notes from all PJCCPC meetings. The project consultant will coordinate distribution of agenda, meeting notes and any other related information. The role of the project consultant in this context will be to develop a public record of the planning process and public sessions. General meeting notes will be provided to the PJCCPC for finalization, conversion to digital documents and included on the project web site.

The consultant team will discuss the project regularly to review and discuss new project information and draft reports with the PJCCPC. Up to six (6) Committee Meetings will be scheduled over the course of the project. A draft schedule will be established for review which will identify approximate timeframes for committee meetings. The consultant team will issue meeting agenda prior to each meeting.

6.0 Community Participation and Outreach Strategy

Beginning at the kick-off meeting, the B&L Team will work with the Committee to prepare and execute this Community Outreach Process and Plan. This will be submitted to DOS for approval. Elements of the Community Outreach process will include:

1. The consultant team will provide templates and draft documents to publicize the project and announce meetings both in paper and digital form that will include the following:
 - a. Advertisement for local newsletters

- b. Invitations
 - c. Announcement flyers
 - d. Comment mailers
 - e. Press releases
 - f. Project website updates
- Project Website – Courtney Strong, Inc., a subcontractor to B&L, has developed a website for the Port Jervis Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Update that will be dedicated to posting relevant information and updates on the development of the plan. Information to be posted on the website will include but not be limited to the following:
 - General plan information
 - Upcoming public meeting schedule, including agendas and minutes
 - Contact Information
 - Minutes of Port Jervis Comprehensive Plan Committee (PJPC) meetings
 - Surveys to collect public input
 - The website address is: <http://portjerviscompplan.wordpress.com/>
2. The consultant team will assist the PJPC in hosting community meetings as follows:
- a. All meetings will be held in a public space within the City. The City Hall Common Council Chambers and the Port Jervis Recreation and Community Center would provide suitable and centralized sites; however, alternative sites should also be identified. The consultant team will provide agendas, mapping, graphic pens, markers, note pads, tracing paper and a digital projector for use in the workshops. A PowerPoint presentation will be provided for each of the community meetings/visioning sessions. Graphic products of workshops will be provided in digital form. All materials will be made available for posting as links on the project web page.
 - b. Two (2) Issues Identification Meetings will be held in summer 2017. These are intended to introduce the project to the public and provide a brainstorming session to direct future meeting efforts. At these meetings, the consulting team will make a short presentation about the project and facilitate a discussion about the “issues of concern” that should be considered as we begin to work on the comprehensive plan update and zoning code revisions.
 - i. UPDATE: Issues Identification Meetings were held at City Hall in the Common Council Chambers on the following dates:
 - 1. Thursday – July 27, 2017 at 7:00pm
 - 2. Thursday – August 10, 2017 at 7:30pm
 - c. One (1) Visioning Workshop will be held during which community stakeholders will participate in ‘hands-on’ development of revitalization strategies. Once a basic understanding of the City’s current state has been established – based on issues identified with the committee and with the public at the issues identification meetings, and through our analysis of existing conditions – the B&L Team will work with the

committee to conduct a Community Visioning Workshop. This will be an interactive, hands-on event designed to generate ideas about the future of Port Jervis.

- i. UPDATE: The Visioning Workshop was held on Tuesday, December 5, 2017 at the Howard Wheat Engine Company Firehouse from 7pm-9pm.
- d. One (1) follow-up Public Information Meeting, to tentatively be held in the spring 2018 will be held to provide for public review and comment on the draft Comprehensive Plan Update. Space/room reservation, refreshments, and supplemental transportation for the public meetings/visioning sessions will be the responsibility of the PJCDA. Based on the outcome of the Visioning Workshop and further consultation with City officials and the committee, the B&L Team will develop initial goals and recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Code Revisions. Before developing these fully, the concepts will be presented to City officials and the public at a City-wide Public Meeting. The B&L Team will facilitate a discussion about these preliminary concepts, and the feedback will be utilized to refine these as the Draft Comprehensive Plan Update and Zoning Code Revisions are prepared.
 - i. UPDATE: The City-wide Public Meeting was held on Wednesday, May 9, 2018 at the Port Jervis Recreation and Community Center from 7pm-9pm.
- e. Two (2) Public Hearings will be held as part of this project – one at the completion of the Draft Comprehensive Plan and another at the completion of the draft revised Zoning Code.

Deliverables: The B&L Team will prepare agendas, presentations, maps, and other materials necessary to conduct each of the public meetings described above. The B&L Team will also prepare summary notes of each public meeting except the public hearings. The City will ensure that formal minutes from the public hearings are prepared.

3. In addition to formal public sessions, the public should be encouraged to attend regular meetings of the PJCPC and be permitted to provide comment during a designated time to be indicated in the meeting agenda. PJCPC meeting notices will be placed on the project web site by the consultant.
4. The outreach effort for public workshops should include the following:
 - a. Coverage in local media outlets should begin in November 2017. This effort should promote the understanding of the project scope and provide information on the proposed project schedule while also promoting upcoming community workshops. Coverage should include contact information for the PJCPC and information regarding participation (i.e., what can residents, businesses, and stakeholders do to participate). Coverage should also include venues the public can utilize in order to stay informed of progress through:

- i. Newspaper and web coverage
 - Pike County Dispatch
 - The Gazette (part of The Record)
 - Radio 106.9
 - Mayor Decker’s Saturday morning radio show
 - The Little Paper
 - Minisink Media Group (radio)
 - City Facebook Page
 - Access TV – Access 23 (Spectrum)
 - ii. Port Jervis Library – The Hub (computer center) and website
 - iii. Local businesses
 - iv. Local organizations and community groups
 - Fire Department
 - Minisink Valley Historical Society
 - Tri-State Chamber of Commerce
 - Rotary
 - PBA
 - The Elks Lodge
 - Interfaith Council
 - The Outdoor Club
 - CSEA
 - Neighborhood Watch
 - Operation PJ PRIDE
 - School Board
 - Empowering Port Jervis
 - PJ Youth Football, Little League, and Tri-State Soccer
 - Business and Professional Women’s Club
 - v. Project website (<http://portjerviscompplan.wordpress.com/>)
 - vi. Flyers posted in schools, churches, stores, and other community centers
 - vii. Flyers in municipal tax bills
- b. Web-based information will be a key component to public outreach. The project website: <http://portjerviscompplan.wordpress.com/> will be developed consistent with the City’s established project web site format. The consultant team will update the project website as needed.
- c. Public service announcements prepared by the consultant team should be scheduled for both radio and television to highlight the public visioning sessions.
- d. Attendance by the project consultants at identified public and civic organizational meetings, events, festivals and special occasions that may occur across the community throughout the duration of the project. The purpose of this activity will be to introduce the project to these groups and seek direct information from these establish community organizations about issues important to them in the downtown area. The consultant team will keep meeting notes and provide summaries to the PJPC and for posting on the project web site.
- e. Public workshops should be promoted as community events and have been targeted for convenient evenings. These workshops should be carried out with enthusiasm and should be forward-looking and forward-thinking. If possible, workshops should not coincide with other events in the area unless it can be held and sponsored by an appropriate group with a strong, unbiased local presence.

- f. Planning for each workshop must have clear objectives and each session should be formatted to achieve stated objectives. Each workshop should begin with a 15-20 minute presentation, aided by PowerPoint slideshows, that explains the context of the area, provides information and planning trends that may serve as revitalization tools, and sets forth questions and issues. The presentation will be done through visual means and will include speakers, panel discussions, or some combination thereof. Depending upon the level of attendance, break-out sessions should be programmed with groups of 8-10 individuals in order to conduct dialogue, engage individuals, and develop consensus. Each group will have one member of the PJCCP available to write down group priorities and identify points of agreement to be addressed as the process continues.
- g. Workshop notes from flipcharts will be compiled and included in follow-up summaries prepared by the consultant team and to be available for public review and comment at City Hall.

Upon completion of the participation plan outlined above, and preceding the official Adoption Process, public displays for City Hall, local libraries, and popular public spaces should be reproduced to explain the evolution of the sub-area plans and the planning process. The intent is to make clear to the public that the revitalization strategy is grounded in public support, is realistic, and is marketable.

7.0 The Adoption Process

The consultant team will prepare a draft Full Environmental Assessment Form as part of the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) Act requirements. Since Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code Updates do not require invasive project work or remediation, the SEQR forms are expected to be prepared for the general area development and will provide a framework for individual project filings that may be required in the future. This process will identify significant threatened and endangered species, cultural resources and other significant environmental issues that will require additional evaluation during subsequent implementation phases.

The consultant team will review and incorporate comments received from the public, community stakeholders, and the PJCCP for the draft study, and will prepare the updated plan and code for review and comment by all involved parties.

The consultant team will submit the final Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Code to the City Council and the DOS for review. If requested, B&L will present the results of the project to the City Council at a scheduled meeting.

8.0 Conclusion

This Community Participation Plan is in draft form for review by the Port Jervis Community Development Agency (PJCD), New York State Department of State and members of the PJCCP. Following a review, this Community Participation Plan will be returned to the consultant team with review comments. The

consultant team will revise and return the document to the City as a guide for the planning process and a methodology for maximizing public participation.

It was recommended that during the October 2017 meeting, the group develop a consensus as to strategy and responsibility for the initial steps. This was accomplished and preceded outreach efforts regarding the Visioning Workshop. It was also recommended that the final document be distributed to the PJPC at a monthly meeting to generate discussion and determine the number of designated members of each subcommittee interested in working on public outreach or participating in organizing public workshops.

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