

Ilion LWRP Update & Comprehensive Plan Project Advisory Committee Meeting #2

Meeting Date:	September 24, 2020
Location:	Ilion Village Hall
Committee Members Present:	Cory Albrecht, HCIDA Board Member Pat Brien, Local Businessman and Commercial Property Owner Bob Fletcher, Village Resident Bill Lennox, Former Business Owner / School Board Bob McDowell, Business Owner Bridget McKinley, Former Board Member Marijo Thompson, Village Treasurer Ron Schoonmaker, Village Board Liaison
Absent Committee Members:	Alan Robinson, Zoning Board Chair
Consultant Team:	Chris Lawton, P.E., Barton & Loguidice Bob Murphy Jr., AICP, Barton & Loguidice John Steinmetz, FAICP, Barton & Loguidice Nancy Pattarini, Paige Marketing Communications Group Carrie McMurray, Paige Marketing Communications Group Maria Garcia (Department of State)

This was the second meeting of the Village of Ilion's LWRP Update/Comprehensive Plan Committee ("Committee"). The meeting was attended by members of the Committee, consultants from Barton & Loguidice (B&L) and Paige Marketing Communications Group (The Paige Group), and a Department of State (DOS) representative.

The purpose of the meeting was to review the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that was conducted at the first meeting. Based on that analysis, some preliminary community priorities will be reviewed by the Committee. Finally, a public outreach plan will be presented to the Committee for discussion.

1. Introductions

Mr. Murphy (B&L) kicked off and initiated a Powerpoint presentation. The presentation outlined the agenda beginning with Committee Business. The Committee Kickoff Meeting Summary from August was approved with some minor edits.

Mr. Murphy introduced Maria Garcia – DOS Project Manager – who was participating via Zoom Video Conference. Also appearing on Zoom were John Steinmetz, a Community Planner with B&L, and Carrie McMurray of Paige Group. The Committee Members and Consultant Team introduced themselves to Ms. Garcia.

Mr. Murphy briefly reviewed the project schedule and our current position within it. Discussion then turned to the pair of documents which will be produced as deliverables of this effort – a Comprehensive Plan and a Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan. Using a comparison provided by DOS, Mr. Murphy showed how the two documents will differ but how they will also be derived from many of the same Committee and community inputs.

2. SWOT Recap

Mr. Murphy passed the presentation over to Ms. Pattarini and Ms. McMurray with The Paige Group to recap the SWOT analysis. They reviewed the goals of a SWOT analysis and several key outcomes, and additional input was received during the meeting. The Committee reviewed the information that was recorded at last month's meeting which can be categorized into the following SWOT factors:

- Internal factors
 - Strengths: characteristics of the Village that give it an advantage over other communities
 - Weaknesses: characteristics of the Village that place it at a disadvantage relative to other communities in the region
- External factors
 - Opportunities: elements in the environment—regional and beyond—that the Village could leverage to its advantage
 - Threats: elements in the environment—regional and beyond—that could present barriers to the Village's revitalization efforts
- Key Outcomes to Date – Building Blocks of the Vision
 - The marina is the premier marina in the area and improvements/enhancements would make it more accessible to residents. Would also increase four-season use by both residents and visitors
 - Residents are hard-working, resilient, giving, and value family.

- Real and/or perceived perceptions of the Village are hindered by lackluster entrances, quality and variety of housing options, and negative impacts of past urban renewal strategies (ex: location of mall)
- The Village is rich in resources – land, waterfront, green spaces, parks, public safety, affordable utilities (new, quality water coming), school system
- Regional growth and economic opportunities have created potential for the Village to become a bedroom community to nearby work site locations
- Additional Steering Committee Recommendations
 - Leverage the rich history of Ilion
 - Importance of strengthening planning and zoning boards to support the plan and future implementation of plan strategies and projects

Mr. Murphy then asked the Committee to think about assets and accessibility in Ilion within a geographical context. Using maps that indicated a variety of assets within the Village ranging from parks, recreation facilities, and historic sites to the commercial districts and the marina, the Committee considered the geographic spread and concentration of such assets and how accessibility played into their usage and benefit to residents. Maps depicting public vs. private ownership as well as wetland and floodplains further refined how such assets can be feasibly leveraged in recommendations coming from this LWRP and Comprehensive Planning effort.

3. Preliminary Community Priorities

The Committee was then asked to brainstorm a set of preliminary priorities that would help drive the initial draft vision statement and policy goals of this project. These preliminary priorities are as follows:

- Ilion history, signage, internet accessible, based at key destinations in Village, gateway enhancement – address negative perception facing Ilion
- Developing Central Ave, properties, streetscape, land banking and IDA, an available properties listing, gateway enhancement
- Downtown core needs to be renovated, not only buildings but also pedestrian spaces and parking areas, gateway enhancement
- Marina enhancements and accessibility act as catalyst for further investment
- Neighborhood amenities, health and wellness, more appealing to young families who might want to make Ilion a bedroom community for their work-life balance

Mr. Murphy briefly showed the Committee many of these priorities mirrored those of the original Village LWRP effort from 2003 – the Central Mohawk Valley LWRP.

4. Public Outreach Plan

Elements of the public outreach plan were discussed, particularly how to ensure broad community input given the COVID-19 environment.

- Purpose: share information, solicit ideas and feedback related to vision and goals, and prioritization of areas of focus/initiatives
- Methods: demonstrate inclusiveness and transparency; state regulations related to COVID-19
 - Stakeholder Surveys – Targeting specific groups (i.e., economic development, small business, recreation, education, etc.) and deployed by committee members
 - Public Surveys – Gather broad public feedback related to vision/goals, strategies/projects, final plan recommendations
 - Videos – Series of videos to use on the web and in social media and on web-based platforms of community partners to educate target audiences about the purpose and benefits of the project, recommended strategies, and plan recommendations
 - Web Page – Dedicated page that educates users about the purpose and benefits of the project and provides information related to the process, the Village’s vision, goals, and strategies. Information would be updated throughout the process
 - Social Media – Proactively share information with the community and offer a mechanism for feedback. Educational posts related to overall initiative (vision, goals, and strategies), project spotlights, process progress/milestones, events, and updates
 - Public Relations/Media Relations
 - Spokesperson – Identification of an initiative spokesperson who can answer questions in both face-to-face and remote environments
 - Talking Points – Development of talking points for the spokesperson and all committee members
 - News Releases/Public Relations Videos – On a monthly basis/as activities warrant, releases (traditional and repurposed videos above) will be specific to general education/awareness and project progress/milestones

5. Next Steps & Adjournment

Committee

- Complete Inventory and Analysis Checklist to the best of your ability
- Continue to build interest and awareness of the project within the community

Consultant Team

- Draft Community Profile
- Draft Community Participation Plan

Next Meeting

- Thursday, October 22, 6pm, Location TBA