

## Ilion LWRP Update & Comprehensive Plan Project Advisory Committee Meeting #4

Meeting Date:	February 4, 2021 @ 6pm
Location:	Ilion Village Hall
Committee Members Present:	Pat Brien, Local Businessman and Commercial Property Owner Liz Hoffman, Business Owner Bill Lennox, Former Business Owner / School Board Bridget McKinley, Former Board Member Alan Robinson, Zoning Board Chair Ron Schoonmaker, Village Board Liaison Marijo Thompson, Village Treasurer
Absent Committee Members:	Cory Albrecht, HCIDA Board Member Bob Fletcher, Village Resident Dick Keeler, HS Principal and Business Owner Bob McDowell, Business Owner
Consultant Team:	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)
Others:	Brian Lamica, Village Mayor

This was the fourth 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 status of the public outreach efforts and begin formulating a draft vision and goals. Discussion centered on stakeholder interviews, the community survey, and preparation for the first public information meeting.

## 1. Introductions

Mr. Murphy (B&L) kicked off and initiated a Powerpoint presentation. The presentation outlined the agenda beginning with Committee Business. Meeting minutes from committee meeting #3 were reviewed and approved. Mr. Murphy briefly reviewed the project schedule and where the project stands today.

Discussion turned to local updates regarding Remington Arms and the Duofold site. The Remington Plant was the first topic of conversation. It was determined that all the buildings were owned by the new buyer. Conversation transitioned to the Duofold site where three (3) juveniles were recently charged with a crime. There was also discussion of a pending \$500k EPA grant to clean up/study the minor contamination on site.

## 2. Community Outreach Plan

The Paige Group presented initial findings of the Community Survey. So far, there were 216 respondents. Some re-occurring themes that were emerging from the preliminary data included revitalizing/rehabilitating old and existing properties, increasing housing options, having four (4) season of recreation, and making the Village appealing to all age groups.

Paige Group requested that the Committee continue to get the word out about the survey with the hope of getting over 300 respondents. Ms. McKinley inquired about having a television advertisement promoting the survey. Ms. Garcia asked about a survey targeting respondents from outside the immediate Village of Ilion area. There were suggestions of promoting it at the Ilion Community Club, the Library's Facebook page, the Village's Facebook page, and the Herkimer Chamber of Commerce.

Mr. Lennox was not surprised by the findings. He stated that there has always been concerns with the maintenance and deterioration of housing. It was suggested that the workforce associated with Cree will help increase median income in the region. Ms. McKinley indicated that there were a lot of rental properties. Mr. Schoonmaker agreed and also noted that there were a lot of absentee landlords and zombie properties.

Mr. Murphy transitioned the community outreach discussion over to the stakeholder interviews. There were seven (7) respondents. The following is a summary of the findings by category:

### Housing

- The appeal of low utilities rates in Ilion should be highlighted
- Ilion is continually increasing the number of middle to lower class renters coming to the area due to the lower cost of living (mainly utilities) and safer neighborhoods than where they are coming from

- People are renting a full-size house for \$1000 or more instead of attempting to purchase. They also choose to rent vs own as they cannot afford to maintain the home
- Turnover and sales of homes could definitely be hurt with the potential loss of Remington Arms
- Changes to code enforcement procedures could be considered to focus on hastening the development of condemned, abandoned yards and homes
- "Up-on-the-hill" vs. "Off-the-hill"

#### Education

- Remington Elementary School houses the Herkimer BOCES programs
  - About 100 adult learners
  - Most drive, some take bus transportation, some walk/bike
  - Many cannot walk or bike due to physical and/or footwear limitations
  - Public bus transport is difficult as closest stop is at London Towers
  - Pathways Academy serves high risk students in grades 7-12
  - Important for dropout prevention and workforce preparation

#### Community Groups

- Could use more organization amongst local businesses
- Improve safety and appearance around Central Plaza

#### Business and Industry, Development and Tourism

- No formal local business alliance
- Establish an Economic Development Committee
- Utilize historic buildings and marina for art exhibits
- Emphasize low utility costs, excellent manufacturing workforce as strengths
- Location and housing options can be a barrier
- Should place electric charging stations at Marina for both cars and boats
  - This will highlight the availability of low-cost power in Ilion

### 3. Vision and Goals Discussion

Much of this discussion was tabled until future meetings. However, Mr. Murphy described to the Committee how input gather from the Community Survey and Stakeholder Outreach can affect community development priorities to be sought in the Vision Statement.

#### 4. Next Steps & Adjournment

##### Committee

- Feedback on Draft Intro & Inventory Sections
- Feedback on Survey & Stakeholder Interviews
  - Continue encouraging stakeholder feedback

##### Consultant Team

- Incorporate Comments from Survey & Stakeholders into the Draft Vision & Goals Framework
  - Distribute to Committee for comment
- Distribute Draft Plan Intro and Inventory Sections
- Incorporate Feedback from Committee into Draft LWRP Intro & Inventory Sections

##### Next Meeting

- Committee Meeting #4: Early March – 3/9 6pm
  - Likely virtual
  - Vision Statement and Goals Framework Confirmation
- Public Info Meeting #1: Late March – 3/30 6:30pm
  - Initial Public Outreach Summary
  - Draft Inventory and Analysis Section
  - Draft Vision Statement and Goals Framework