

# Fishkill Avenue Corridor Committee

## Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, April 3, 2024

6:30 -8:00 PM

23 West Center Street, Beacon, NY 12508 (Recreation Center)

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**Present:** Natalie Quinn (City Planner), J.C. Calderon (Chair), Jason Healy, Atticus Lanigan, Olga Tirado, Yvonne Caruthers, Nick Guertin, Stephen Clair, Garrett Duquesne

**Absent:** Jan Worthy, Brent Spodek, Brent Stapleton

**Minutes by:** Garrett Duquesne

### 1. Ice Breaker / Team Building Exercise

- Committee Chair, J.C. Calderon indicated that committee members learning more about each other in the early stage will be helpful. He noted that from experience with the Main St. Access Committee, which lasted 2-3 years, it is important for committee members to feel engaged. He noted that the Rt. 52 committee will have numerous ways to be accessible, both within the committee and for the public.
- Beacon City Planner, Natalie Quinn noted that through biking, she became initially familiar with Beacon and noted that integrating safe and accessible biking into the visioning of the corridor is a good consideration for the committee.
- Committee Member Atticus noted that biking infrastructure in the City is lacking, particularly from a safety standpoint. She indicated that one of her favorite spaces in Beacon is the stairs of the Salvation Army, as a relaxing quasi-public space. She noted that integrating pocket parks into busy corridors like Main St. is important. She cited the excellent community spirit that exists as a major positive.
- Committee Member Jay noted that his family's vehicle business has had a presence in Beacon since the 1990s and that his family has had a presence in the City for decades. As a private property owner within the corridor, he identified that consensus-based recommendations for future uses and a planned vision for the area will be helpful for those in the corridor and for the City overall.
- Committee Member Olga noted that she has planning and non-profit tourism experience. She indicated that as a resident within the lofts, it is helpful to hear the perspectives of her neighbors, which is an additional resource for the committee.
- Committee Member Stephen discussed his music-based background which led to a permanent space for Beacon Music Factory on Rt. 52. He identified the importance that music and the arts contribute to the City.
- Committee Member Nick identified that he had an architecture and planning background. He noted that the variety of recreational opportunities in Beacon make it unique, including the parks and trailways. He noted that Beacon is accessible for him despite not having a personal vehicle. He noted that he appreciates the ability to have a workshare option at a local farm.

- Committee Member Yvonne noted that she has been heavily involved in music in her career. She indicated that her favorite public space was the outdoor patio at Kitchen and Coffee. She stated that the need for enhanced bicycle safety in the City is significant. She identified that as a Committee member, in addition to short term planning, looking 20+ years ahead will provide good context.
- Committee Member Garrett noted that he is a lifelong Beacon resident and that he felt that the changes experienced in the last 20+ years associated with the City's revitalization have been overwhelmingly positive. He indicated that the recreational resources of the City such as the river, Mt. Beacon, and the trailways are the best part about the City. His favorite place in Beacon is Memorial park playing pickup soccer.
- Committee Chair, J.C. Calderon noted that traditionally, great places arise both organically and/or through planned growth. He noted that through a thoughtful and careful planning process, with consideration for all stakeholders, the Committee had a great opportunity to have positive impact. He encouraged all on the committee to help each other as all will bring unique perspectives.

## **2. Issue Prioritization and Potential Solution Identification**

- Beacon City Planner, Natalie Quinn, noted that the committee will meet once per month, likely targeting the first Wednesday. She noted that smaller groups meeting outside of the committee in smaller breakout groups would be helpful.
- Committee members agreed that placing the corridor into topic areas would help to organize planning concepts. The following subject areas were initially identified:
  - Zoning (Existing Zoning Districts & the potential for updates), with a focus on permissible land uses.
  - Signage/Gateway/public space/Character branding of the corridor
  - Safety/Pedestrian/street-scape/complete streets considerations
  - Landscaping/Stormwater
  - Transportation Connections:
    - Matteawan connection to City-owned 50-acres
    - Rail trail
- Committee members identified that these topic areas will be viewed through a short to long term lens.
- Committee members agreed to preliminarily breakout into two focus groups and begin documenting baseline data:

A. Zoning (Atticus / Jay / Nick / Garrett)

Data to research

- Seek Employment data in the corridor
- Identify relevant existing land-use data, pulled from existing Comprehensive Plan
- School Capacity info
- Public infrastructure capacity (water/sewer)

Initial questions

- Stability of existing industrial sector, is there growth potential in this sector?

Other Considerations/observations

- 4 identifiable land-uses clusters exist (1- industrial portion; 2- residential portion [Groveville/the Lofts; 3- existing business corridor; 4- 50+ acre prison property])
- Inquiry made as to whether the Committee would get feedback from City officials to ensure it is making recommendations that are reasonable/potentially to be supported. Beacon City Planner, Natalie Quinn noted that there are points for feedback from the community/City Officials, and that as a Planner she will be assisting the Committee along the way in this regard.

B. Transportation Connections/Complete Streets (Yvonne / Olga / Steven)

Data to research

- Traffic capacity
- Clarification on Rt. 52 right-of-way area (how wide is Rt. 52, need property survey/boundary info)

Initial questions

- Have any landowners been approached about the prospect of a potentially new roadway connection to 50+ acres?

Other Considerations/observations

- Bridge from Bridge St. to the Lofts/Groveville while understandably having a barrier in place to prevent vehicle traffic, is not very accessible to cyclists. Interested in the ownership of the bridge as this is an existing and long-term great connection point.
- Walking tour to be planned either in small groups or collectively, to be arranged by email.

**3. Stakeholder and Public Engagement**

- At the March 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, numerous stakeholders were identified.

- Committee Members noted that early input would be helpful from the Building Inspector, DPW/Engineering, corridor land-owners, Parks and Recreation, Police/Fire.
- Committee Chair, J.C. Calderon noted that the comments of the Conservation Advisory Council and Greenway Committee would be circulated.

#### **4. Miscellaneous / Next Steps**

- Next meeting is planned for Wednesday, May 1st.
- Breakout groups to begin research / data collection and document it for circulation in advance of the next meeting.
- Contact list to be circulated to assist Committee members to meet in breakout groups / plan site visits.

END OF MEETING: 8:00 PM