

summary

City of Rochester Vacuum Oil Brownfield Opportunity Area Step 3 Implementation Strategy

**Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3
March 22, 2015 @ 6:00 PM**

1. Welcome and Introductions

Dorraine Kirkmire, City of Rochester, welcomed committee members and requested those in attendance introduce themselves (please see attached sign-in sheet for list of meeting attendees).

2. How Did We Get Here?

Kimberly Baptiste, Bergmann Associates, provided a brief overview of the project to date, noting:

- Key project milestones
- Recapping the past Public Meetings' ideas and outcomes
- Significant recent projects occurring within the BOA boundary
- BOA Plan/GEIS Activities

Please refer to attached PPT presentation for additional detail.

3. Public Meeting Recap

Kimberly recapped the major ideas and outcomes that came from the public meeting that took place on October 29th, 2015. The meeting was organized as an open house with 6 stations. Each station provided information on a specific topic relating to the Vacuum Oil BOA. The community provided a range of feedback from property maintenance assistance to improving street functions of the area.

- A representative of the Advisory Committee reiterated the importance of a comment received at the Public Meeting "Please preserve mix-racial/socioeconomic—we don't need to become another Cornhill"

4. Project Updates and Implementation Activities

Kimberly Baptiste and Joseph Biondolillo shared information on key implementation activities occurring in the study area, exclusive of the BOA funded activities:

- The City, within the Brownfield Cleanup Program, completed investigative work. Further investigative work is underway and expected to be completed in May 2016.
- DHD Ventures (owners of 5 and 15 Flint Street) have submitted their Remedial Investigative Report (RIR) to DEC. The cleanup process is expected to commence in the summer of 2016.

This project is funded by the New York State Department of State Brownfield Opportunity Area Program.

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- Dorian Hall questioned when the information for the DHD project would become available for public review. Dorian indicated that PLEX would like to meet with DEC on the BCP activities and to see the results of the investigations.
- The Foodlink building has an interested party who has started moving forward with independent studies.
- 920 Exchange Street has moved forward with the property's Phase I ESA and Land Appraisal through the BOA program. The property owners anticipate moving forward with a Phase II ESA and Geotechnical analysis using other funding sources.
- Andy Raus (Bergmann Associates) discussed one of the City's projects that was submitted for grant funding through the Consolidated Funding Application process – the West River Wall. Andy noted the project assessed the existing wall from Ford Street to the former rail bridge and included the identification of wall design alternatives to improve access to the river, as well as flood protection. The project in Vacuum Oil BOA is a continuation of a recently completed planning process to the north in Corn Hill.

5. The BOA Action Plan/GEIS Activities

Kimberly reviewed the various elements of the BOA Implementation Strategy and GEIS Activities. Kimberly noted the different components including the Vision Plan, Traffic Analysis, Transportation Assessment, Floodplain Analysis and the Housing Reinvestment Strategy.

- Kimberly discussed briefly the components of the vision plan; including the newly developed housing units in the northern area of the study area.
 - Joel Helfrich, 920 Exchange Street, stated that since the visioning and the Vision Plan was created, the neighborhood has changed. He indicated that more meetings need to occur and are a fundamental component of a successful project. He suggested that different groups be brought together as well as, creating a neighborhood “working group” for the study area.
 - The notion that the existing water tower is an iconic element of the neighborhood was also noted. Could be highlighted as center of revitalization efforts and incorporated into future branding of the neighborhood.
 - A question was raised as to how many homes/people would be displaced with the implementation of the Northern housing units in the Master Plan (area around Doran, Ethel, Columbia Ave). Kimberly answered by stating the current units would be replaced with new housing units though the exact number would need to be reviewed in the Step 2 document. The housing in this area is challenged, with both vacant units and elevated levels of deteriorated housing. This area was identified as a target reinvestment area by the neighborhood during the Step 2 process due to safety and crime concerns. This is a long-term strategy that would require land assembly and an organizational framework that could facilitate a redevelopment of this scale.
- Kimberly presented the traffic analysis and presented recommendations that would mitigate the few repercussions associated with full build out conditions. Kimberly also reviewed potential

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roadway alignments that would extend Magnolia Street and connect the existing residential neighborhood directly to the waterfront.

- A number of committee members noted that Magnolia Street has a large number of vehicles using it, which is leading to some localized congestion issues. The question was asked - if the roadway were extended, would it be one way? Kimberly noted that was not the intent but the design is very conceptual at this time. Additional analysis and design is warranted before final configuration is established. It was stated that a one-way configuration was not seen as desirable by the neighborhood.
 - The idea of a tram as an alternative to traditional public transportation – for both students and residents – was noted.
- Andy presented the different steps that took place to assess the FEMA floodplain. He discussed key findings and reviewed recommendations and next steps associated with revising the FEMA 100-year elevation.
- Kimberly noted that Shumaker Consulting completed a site assessment to identify “wet areas” within the BOA boundary. She noted limited areas were identified (totaling less than 1 acre) and that they were not likely to restrict future development plans within the study area.
- Kimberly reviewed the geotechnical efforts that have taken place to date within the study area. Dorraine noted the intent of this effort is to inform future decisions regarding the location of new buildings, structures and associated infrastructure. Historical data and soil boring logs have been compiled to show which areas of the study area have yet to be analyzed, so additional work can be completed.
- Kimberly discussed the components of the waterfront and public realm master plan, including identifying potential open space improvements, new neighborhood parks and community gathering areas.
- Eric Halvorsen (RKG Associates) discussed the work that was completed in association with the Housing Reinvestment Strategy, including a review of existing studies and data, identification of housing needs and opportunities, strategies to address neighborhood preservation and quality-of-life, and financing tools and approaches to achieve housing objectives.
 - A number of residents stated that the rent structure currently being experienced within the study area is too high for its residents to continue living in their homes and there are concerns about displacement. Eric noted this will be addressed within the final Housing Reinvestment Strategy document.

6. Next Steps

The meeting concluded with a summary of next steps:

- Advancement of BOA and GEIS tasks
- Complete Draft BOA/GEIS document by June/July 2016
- Informational public meeting – Summer 2016