

EAST AURORA VILLAGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

January 5, 2016 Meeting Minutes

OBJECTIVE

First meeting of the Elm/Riley (E/R) Corridor Planning Study. Establish the steering committee. Introduce study consultant, Matt Ingalls. Meeting agenda appended.

ATTENDEES

EA Planning Committee			
Cornell (Bud) Babcock		Angela Griffis	
Kristen Cameron		Geoffrey Hintz	
Dan Castle	Committee Chair	Allen Ott, Jr.	
Lowell Dewey			
EA Village			
Bill Kramer	Building Code Inspection	Allan Kasprzak	Mayor
Deborah Carr-Hoagland	Trustee	Randolph West	Trustee
Other Attendees			
Peggy Cooke	Aurora Ice Association		
Gary Grote	Greater EA Chamber of Commerce		
Matt Ingalls	Ingalls Planning & Design		
Karen Lee	Village Resident		
John Newton	EA Historic Preservation Committee		

ACTION ITEMS

1. Invite the East Aurora Bee and East Aurora Advertiser to report on the next EAPC meeting.
ACCOUNTABILITY: Bryan Gazda
ACTION DUE: As soon after the February meeting date is confirmed as can be reasonably arranged.
2. Confirm the next EAPC meeting in February.
ACCOUNTABILITY: Dan Castle
ACTION DUE: As soon as can be reasonably arranged.
UPDATE: Schedule conflicts have tentatively changed the next meeting date to be February 23, 2016.
3. Provide to Geoff Hintz the email addresses of all meeting attendees.
ACCOUNTABILITY: Dan Castle
ACTION DUE: As soon as can be reasonably arranged.
UPDATE: Action completed
4. a) Define the E/R Corridor boundary by deciding what is important to be included. b) What are the primary issues to be addressed by the study? What are the opportunities, i.e., geographic, walkability, senior living accommodations? What are the assets to be leveraged?
ACCOUNTABILITY: Each member of the E/R Corridor Planning Study group
ACTION DUE: Prior to the February meeting.

MEETING DETAIL

Dan opened the meeting with an overview of the process that selected Ingalls Planning & Design (IPD) as the study consultant. The E/R Corridor Planning Study group will consist of the following ten people:

1. Dan Castle, EAPC
2. Angela Griffis, EAPC
3. Geoff Hintz, EAPC
4. Randy West, EAVB

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5. Bryan Gazda, EA Village Administrator
6. John Newton, EA Historic Preservation Committee
7. Gary Grote, Greater EA Chamber of Commerce
8. Peggy Cooke, Aurora Ice Association
9. Alix Martin, Elm St business owner
10. Karen Lee, resident

Matt Ingalls requested that everyone introduce themselves and state what they wanted to see come out of this study.

- Karen wanted to see her street protected (Whaley).
- Lowell wants to do the best to assure what is planned and built is done right. Al Ott supported this.
- Angela wants to foster organic growth. She liked that IPD has experience in obtaining outside funding for planning efforts such as a comprehensive plan.
- Bud wants to see more than just E/R corridor evaluated. He would include both sides of the railroad track. The study needs to be sensitive to the Village's historical and heritage elements. Additionally, the plan should focus on the future, 5 to 10 years out, in addition to recommendations for the present.
- Geoff felt strongly that EA is the best place to live in WNY - a place where people want to visit and live. He wants to build upon what makes EA unique and interesting. Perhaps obtaining recognition from the League of American Bicyclists as being bike friendly would enhance EA.
- Kristen echoes that residents have concerns that need to be addressed. Develop/keep/maintain a place that people want to visit and live in.
- Bill wants to keep the codes sorted out and clarity in code definition.
- Al Kasprzak does not want the Village Board perceived as having dictated what is in the study. Rather that the board is seen as an enabler, assisting in a plan that continues the ongoing growth in the village.
- Peggy said the Aurora Ice Association has always felt it important to locate the ice rink downtown.
- John wants to see the historic character of the corridor protected and preserved. He also supports biking and climate smart communities. EA is already recognized as a climate smart community.
- Gary wants to see a plan developed by all the different organizations and people involved in the corridor.
- Randy wants to promote growth of the Village brand. Need to come up with a style, a look, a brand that makes people want to live in the Village, even if the cost (taxes) is higher.
- Deborah would like to figure out what to do with the old fire house. Geoff was concerned that including the fire house increased the scope of the study.

Matt liked what Bud stated about focusing on both the present and future. He wants to uncover why Villagers choose to live where they do and will have IPD investigate that. EA is ahead of the curve on being a premiere community. Having a tree committee is important for the community that most municipalities haven't grasped. EA can reach for finer grain activities for betterment. It is important to pay attention to the Village edges and gateways.

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Matt believes a successful Planning Study is developed collaboratively and iteratively over time; not a report that IPD develops and recommends at the end.

E/R CORRIDOR AREA OF INTEREST: Matt pointed to the easel poster of an aerial view of the Village showing the E/R Corridor in the center without a boundary for the study. Lowell said the aerial picture provided in the RFP had the E/R Corridor area of interest clouded; done without much thought given to specifics, so the boundaries were intentionally vague. Bill felt the bubble was too big. Gary agreed, saying it should be narrowed down. Matt wants a boundary defined as he feels vagaries create public uncertainty and suspicions. At the very least he wants to have a few options for the first community workshop and use the meeting to help define boundaries.

SCHEDULE: A comprehensive plan would be short changed with a five to six month schedule to complete. But Matt feels this timeframe is sufficient to do a good job on the study.

Matt wasn't sure how many times IPD needed to present to the Village Board. The group felt IPD should update the Board after the first Community Workshop and again prior to the second Community Workshop.

IPD proposed a schedule (appended) consisting of monthly meeting over the next six months. The next meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 9, 2016 at 7PM. To help get the message out for the first community workshop Dan suggested that both the EA Bee and EA Advertiser be invited to the next meeting. Lowell felt it critical to get those property owners engaged that may be affected by changes the study may propose. Matt agreed it is best to have owners involved in the process. The study should not make recommendations without the owners involved. Gary cautioned that commercial renters will have different thinking than commercial owners. Consideration for commercial value needs to be taken into account.

DATA COLLECTION: Plans and data suggested for review were:

- Aurorans for Climate and Energy Sense (ACES). John said this is an informal committee.
- Intermodal Transportation Plan (5 to 6 years old)
- Design Guidelines
- Greater Buffalo Niagara Transportation Council (GBNRTC) Parking Inventory and Traffic Counts
- There is GIS available at the EA website

FIRST COMMUNITY WORKSHOP: IPD likes having the first public meeting early in the process because it is instrumental to learn what is important in order to develop the vision. The first meeting will focus on issues which will assist in knowing and leveraging assets. What are the opportunities and assets? Extract from the attendees:

1. Where is the E/R Corridor now?
2. Where do we want to go in two, five, and ten years from now?
3. How do we get there?

IPD has a draft agenda. One of the exercises will be to show 40 to 60 images, each for 5 to 10 seconds, asking the attendees to rate them good or bad. IPD compiles the ratings to achieve consensus. Another exercise is to form breakout groups, each with a facilitator, with the objective of establishing a long term vision. The groups re-gather and report their conclusions.

IPD records all public meetings. The information collected will be reviewed, analyzed, and distilled into a write-up that will be presented to the study committee for discussion, revision, and finalization.

It was suggested that this meeting be held at the Aurora Ice Association's ice rink building.

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SECOND COMMUNITY WORKSHOP: The second meeting will be an open house for the public to share their thoughts. Stations will be set up with alternatives for review and comment.

At the April meeting IPD will have a first cut at what they believe is the study vision and goals.

OTHER: Bill asked if this study would result in changes to zoning districts. Randy responded that he thought there would be recommendations for zoning revisions resulting from the study. Matt said the study will lead toward plan definition that will direct zoning. Dan ended by saying that we need to go through the process and first see what results from the work.

Respectfully submitted,

Geoffrey K. Hintz

DRAFT

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agenda

Elm-Riley Corridor Plan

Project kick-off
Steering Committee Meeting #1
January 5, 2016
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM

7:00 – 7:10 Introductions / Day Recap

7:10 – 7:30 Planning Process & Schedule

- Inventory, Data Gathering, and Analysis
 - What plans, reports and initiatives should we review?

7:30 – 7:50 Planning Boundary

- Base Map

7:50 – 8:00 Community Workshop – Date, Place and Format

- Community Workshop Draft Agenda

8:00 – 8:25 Discovery Session

8:25 – 8:30 Next Steps

- Inventory, Data Gathering, and Analysis
- SC#2 meeting – February
- Community Workshop – March

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Draft Schedule

	Months					
	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun
Elm-Riley Corridor Plan						
Task 1. Project Kick-off & Boundary Definition	X					
Task 2. Inventory, Data Gathering, and Analysis		X				
Task 3. Community / Neighborhood Workshop			X			
Task 4. Vision & Goals				X		
Task 5. Draft Plan					X	
Task 6. Final Elm-Riley Corridor Plan						X
						5-Jan-16
Committee Meetings	X					
Community Workshops / Meetings	X					