



Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #1

Thursday, May 15, 2025, 6:00 to 8:00 pm | Village Hall, 112 Main Street, Dobbs Ferry, NY

Meeting Summary

New York State Assemblymember MaryJane Shimsky opened the meeting and congratulated the Village of Dobbs Ferry on the achievement of being selected for the NY Forward program. She emphasized that this investment shows the important transition downtowns are going through in order to enhance their safety and attractiveness. Mayor Vincent Rossillo then provided welcoming remarks and emphasized the accomplishment of this investment of the NY Forward Program in the Village. Andrew Regenstein, member of the Mid-Hudson Regional Economic Development Council (REDC) and Co-Chair of the Dobbs Ferry NY Forward Local Planning Committee (LPC), also provided brief welcoming remarks.

Susan Landfried, New York State Department of State (DOS) Project Manager for the NY Forward Round 3 communities, explained that the LPC is a state-approved body comprising diverse members to ensure all community voices are heard. Ms. Landfried asked the LPC members to introduce themselves and share something about Dobbs Ferry that wouldn't be obvious to a visitor. The following LPC Members introduced themselves: Mayor Rossillo, Andrew Regenstein, Steve Tilly, Dr. Nitin Gupta, Christy Knell, Donna Cassell, Ed Trader, Salena Alamprese, Laura Danforth, Joseph Lucasey, and JB Gomez.

Ms. Landfried provided an overview of the NY Forward program, which was expanded in 2022 to support smaller communities in creating vibrant downtowns. The process involves approximately eight months of planning, culminating in a Strategic Investment Plan (SIP). Key points of the timeline include five to six LPC meetings and two public workshops, with the first workshop scheduled for the beginning of June. The SIP draft is expected in December, with the final version due to New York State in January. The project development process will involve public engagement to identify and refine eligible projects. An Open Call for Projects will be launched on June 4th, and public feedback will be crucial in shaping the final project list. The evaluation criteria will be based on state, regional, and local goals, community support, readiness, impact, and efficient use of public resources. Eligible projects include new development or rehabilitation of existing buildings, public improvements, small project funds, and branding and marketing initiatives. Ineligible projects include standalone planning studies, operational costs, and property acquisitions. Eligible projects must be shovel-ready within two years of the award and meet specific criteria, including sponsor capacity and financing.

Ms. Landfried opened the floor to questions from the LPC regarding the NY Forward Program. LPC comments are summarized below:

- > Is there Minority and Woman-owned Business Enterprise (MWBE) requirements?
- > Is there a benefit to being within the downtown area for other government grants?
- > How many projects should be expected?
- > Is there negotiations between the developers about how much they will present vs how much the grant will provide?
- > Is there a prevailing wage requirement?
- > Who is responsible for the reimbursement?

Following, Mayor Rosillo outlined the NY Forward Boundary Area, which defines the area of targeted investment centered around Main Street and Cedar Street. The NY Forward Boundary was formed to include Memorial Park and

the site of the proposed High Street Park. It was suggested that the NY Forward Boundary Area be extended to include an area containing Rochambeau Liquor Store near Route 9. The LPC agreed to this extension.

Christiana (Christie) Kastalek, Project Manager from VHB – the consulting firm that is leading the state and subconsultant project team, introduced a preliminary demographic snapshot of downtown Dobbs Ferry. Among several of the key data points, the LPC members were surprised to find that the number of children within the area of the downtown had increased while understanding that the enrollment in the school district had decreased.

Ms. Kastalek then introduced three interactive activities for the LPC that included identifying opportunities and challenges in downtown Dobbs Ferry and envisioning the future of Dobbs Ferry. The results highlighted a desire for improved walkability as well as the creation of a welcoming and diverse downtown that is a destination for visitors. The resulting feedback was fed into a word cloud graphic as shown below.

What feeling or atmosphere do you want downtown to have for residents and visitors?



Ms. Kastalek went on to provide an overview of the engagement process, noting that public engagement will be facilitated through various channels including a project website, digital and paper flyering, targeted stakeholder coordination, social media posts, newsletters, and directed community outreach. The LPC discussed strategies to encourage broad participation, including brainstorming potential stakeholder groups such as the Dobbs Ferry Public Library. Ms. Kastalek walked through the LPC tentative meeting schedule for the project, confirmed the dates with the LPC, and emphasized key milestones including public engagement events, reviewing and incorporating public feedback, refining projects, selecting projects, and preparing the SIP. Following the night's first LPC meeting it was agreed that all future meetings would be scheduled 6:15 to 8:15 PM, with subsequent LPC meeting dates scheduled through October 2025. Public engagement will be ongoing, with additional opportunities to gather feedback and refine project proposals at several events. The first Public Workshop is scheduled for June 3, 2025 from 6:00 to 8:00 PM. The final Strategic Investment Plan will be submitted to the state in early-January 2026, with funding announcement expected in the spring of 2026.

Prior to the close of the LPC meeting, the public comment portion was opened. Public comments are summarized below:

- Will 25% of the project costs be paid by the project sponsor?
- How many communities have received NYF funding?
- Is there a way to compare against previously successful NY Forward projects?
- Is there federal funding involved?
- Is the NY Forward process complimentary to the Village's comprehensive planning process?