

Genesee County Sub-Regional Forum

Wednesday, October 21, 2015

Batavia City Hall

Moderator/Note Taker: Greg Albert, Senior Planner, G/FLRPC

Attendees:

Alfred McGinnis, Batavia Planning Board

Julie Pacette, Batavia Development Corporation

Judy Boyle, Oakfield ZBA

Derik Kane, Genesee County Planning

Carl Hyde, Town of Bethany

Felipe Oltramari, Genesee County Planning

Laurie Oltramari, Batavia BID

Anthony Condello, Batavia BID

Rachel Tabelski, GCEDC

Ken Lauer, Village of Corfu

Rae Frank, Independent Living of the Genesee Region

Brownfields

- City of Batavia has a Brownfield BOA plan with identified focus areas
 - Mall Site
 - Creek Area
 - Ellicott Street
 - Harvester Center
 - Medical Corridor
- Batavia has submitted application to DEC for cleanup funding
- Some environmental studies have been completed on properties
- Funding needs to be secured to advance brownfield redevelopment and close gap for developers to step in
- Potential for brownfield property land bank

Economic Development

- Review Batavia Pathway to Prosperity Draft
- LeRoy has been named a quarter-finalist for America's Best Communities Competition; currently updating a comprehensive strategy for the next round of the competition.
- Flood plain updates limiting development
- City of Batavia looking to utilize PILOT Increment Financing to provide incentives to developers for Retail projects with PILOT funding going into a BOA redevelopment fund
- Shovel-ready strategy identified 7 key sites in Genesee County for development

- Each site has various infrastructure in place currently
- GCEDC will help market available commercial properties in the county to developers
- Infill development is a goal for the Business Improvement District
- Redevelopment loan fund is available for mixed-use properties
- Entrepreneurship and innovation is a key focus area
- Need to expand microenterprise program
- Need to connect entrepreneurs with resources to establish business plan
- Encourage K-12 and BOCES to emphasize entrepreneurship
- Develop a business climate survey to capture the desires and needs of business community
- Agriculture is a huge industry for the County

Downtowns

- Small business development is needed throughout the County.
- Batavia BID continues façade improvement program
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Tourism

- Opportunity to connect Kiwanis park to Downtown Batavia
- New kayak launch points throughout the County
- Need to connect recreational opportunities to GCC students and bring students into Batavia more frequently

Environmental/Water Resources

- LWRP project in Genesee/Wyoming Counties Tonawanda Creek inland waterway
- Creek has an impact on recreation and agriculture
- CRS program can help residents mitigate insurance costs of flood insurance

Natural Resources

- Flooding a concern for many municipalities within the County
- FEMA flood map updates posing challenges for municipalities

Land Use

- Farmland Protection Plan is being updated
- Smart Growth Plan is scheduled to be updated in 2016
- Comprehensive plans are being updated in Bergen and a variety of other municipalities
- Walkability plan through GTC provided recommendations for some Genesee County municipalities
- Possibilities of establishing purchase of development rights program in Genesee County in the future

Infrastructure

- Wi-fi infrastructure is a need for school districts
- State technology bond may be able to assist school districts in wi-fi/technology upgrades
- Water buildout for STAMP project
- County water district/water project has been discussed in the past
- Bethany has water capacity issues restraining development
- What will be the traffic impact of STAMP, need for road expansion?
- Traffic study was completed for Route 77
- Central corridor traffic study was completed for County

Buildings/Housing

- Genesee County is updating their Housing Plan
- Lack of middle income housing
- Lack of senior housing throughout the County
- Need for services to increase independent living
- Housing continuum for care is provided through homeless alliance of WNY
 - Program helps secure housing options for the homeless
- Programs available to assist in accessibility issues
- “Zombie” homes are an issue in Bethany as well as other municipalities in the County
- City of Batavia is actively working on an initiative that will address vacant properties
- Habitat for Humanity is a potential option to address blighted properties and has been successful in the past
- Batavia Mall in talks with property owners/tenants on improvements to the Mall and plan for the future
- Senior Housing is a new in Oakfield
- Poverty is an issue in Oakfield, need funding for home repair to help residents fix up properties
- County housing need assessment is underway
- Smart Genesee Program looking to address the question of where new housing will go
- Housing is a huge need with STAMP beginning to be developed and bringing workers to the County

Other

- Potential for consolidation of services/smart growth opportunities
 - Corfu looked into consolidation
 - Elba looked into consolidation