Project Name:	NY Forward Stamford
Subject:	Local Planning Committee Meeting #2
Meeting Location:	Stamford Village Hall (84 Main Street)
Meeting Date:	September 17
Meeting Time:	5:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Participants:

Local Planning Committee

Robert Schneider (Co-Chair)
Patrick Barnes
Hannah Bradfield
Patricia Heath
Cathy McKenna
Antonia Besculides
Linda Stratigos

Not present: Peg Ellsworth (Co-Chair), Mary Skinner, Letty Karlsen, Salvatore Fabbella

New York State

Stephen Yerly, AICP, Department of State (DOS)

Not present: Tammy Kocak (ESD), Omar Sanders (ESD), Taylor Disco (HCR), Allison Bodine (DOS)

Consultant Team

Sarah Yackel, AICP, Principal, BFJ Planning

Suzanne Goldberg, AICP, Associate, BFJ Planning

The purpose of this meeting was to provide an overview of all projects submitted through the Open Call for Projects process. Approximately 10 members of the public attended the meeting. The presentation is posted on the Stamford NY Forward website and can be referred to for additional details.

NY Forward Code of Conduct

- Mayor Robert Schneider read aloud the NY Forward Code of Conduct, reminding members of their obligation to act in the public interest and to recuse themselves when necessary.
- The following LPC members disclosed conflicts of interest with potential projects:
  - Hannah Bradfield, TPs Café
  - Linda Stratigos, Stamford Library and Western Catskills Community Revitalization Council, Inc (WCCRC)

- Cathy McKenna, Stamford Wellness Center and Stamford Village Improvement Association
- Patricia Heath, Stamford Library
- Patrick Barnes, WCCRC
- Antonia Besculides, WCCRC

Planning Process and Engagement Updates

- Suzanne Goldberg (BFJ Planning) presented a summary of the key issues and opportunities that emerged from the first Public Workshop. Topics covered include housing, public space and connectivity, employment and economic development, and quality of life.

Updated Vision and Revitalization Strategy

- Ms. Goldberg presented the draft Vision Statement, which was refined from the original NY Forward application with input from the LPC and the public engagement thus far.
- Ms. Goldberg then described a set of draft goals for the Downtown, which should align with potential projects
- A member of the LPC requested a grammatical change to a housing goal to emphasize that both rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of existing apartments should be encouraged.

NY Forward Boundary

- The LPC voted to revise the NY Forward Area boundary generally based on the option presented, extending the boundary south past South Street to the Catskill Scenic Trail. The LPC also opted to remove three parcels along Lake Street to the north that were determined not to be critical to the downtown core. Additional boundary adjustments may be considered based on project applications.

Project Evaluation Recap

- Ms. Goldberg gave an overview of the eligible project types. She also reviewed project match requirements, including sponsor contributions, project size expectations, and details on the Small Project Fund.

Open Call for Projects Summary

- Sarah Yackel (BFJ Planning) and Ms. Goldberg provided a summary of projects submitted through the Open Call for Projects process. Submissions consisted of 33 private projects, 5 public projects, 8 nonprofit projects, and 24 Small Project Fund Interest Forms. For details on each project, please refer to the presentation.

LPC Comments and Questions on Project Submissions

- Property Ownership
  - Comment: Applicants are interested in pursuing projects on properties they do not currently own.
- Tops Market
  - Question: Are chain companies eligible to apply?
  - Response: Yes, anyone can apply.

- Stamford Heritage Trail
    - Comment: The proposal is similar to the Village's proposed wayfinding and branding project. The Village should meet with the applicant to discuss potential collaboration.
- 20 Railroad Ave
    - Comment: The project sponsor needs to confirm whether the proposed housing will be rental. NY Forward funds cannot be used to construct homes that will subsequently be sold due to State clawback requirements. Clawback periods are typically five years, depending on the State department. If the proposed townhouses will be rentals, the project may be eligible.
    - Question: Are there income requirements on proposed housing?
    - Response: No.
- Harb's Farm (56 Railroad Ave)
    - Comment: The project is located outside the Village and therefore does not meet eligibility requirements.
- Stamford Library
    - Comment: Landscaping is only eligible if included as part of a larger parks project.
- Project Timeline
    - Question: Once funds are awarded, what is the project timeline?
    - Response: Sponsors should be ready to begin within two years of award, and projects should ideally be completed within five years. Applicants must wait until funding is awarded and a contract is executed with the State before proceeding.

Next Steps

- The LPC should review the Open Call forms submitted.
- A Funding Information Session for applicants is scheduled for September 22, 2026, at 12:00 via Zoom.

Public Comment

Members of the public were invited to share comments and questions. The following is a summary of the discussion.

- Project Scope
    - Question: Can the LPC ask project sponsors to scale down their proposed projects?
    - Response: Yes
- Project Eligibility
    - Question: Are projects located outside the Village ineligible?
    - Response: Yes, projects must be located within the Village to be eligible.
- Project Match
    - Question: If an applicant originally proposed 75% NYF funding, can they increase their private match?
    - Response: Yes. The goal is to help project sponsors put their strongest possible project forward, including identifying opportunities to increase their private match.