

SECTION VII - LOCAL COMMITMENT AND CONSULTATION

INTRODUCTION

The LWRP Advisory Committee was comprised of ten persons, representing different interests in the community. These persons included municipal leaders from some of the major riverfront communities; the Directors of the County’s Business Development Corporation, Planning Department, and Convention and Visitors Bureau; environmentalists; the engineer of record for the first phase of the Tioughnioga River Trail; the City’s Community Development Consultant and author of this LWRP; and the community at-large. It was hoped that these representatives would shape the Plan and then report back to their respective constituencies, municipalities, and organizations as advocates for the Plan. Members of the Advisory Committee include the following persons:

Tom Gallagher, Mayor City of Cortland 25 Court Street Cortland, New York 13045	John Pitman, Mayor Village of Marathon PO Box 403 Marathon, New York 13803
Dan Dineen, Director Cortland County Planning Department 37 Church Street Cortland, New York 13045	Jim Murphy, Supervisor Town of Virgil 1122 Route 392 Cortland, New York 13045
Ken Teter, P.E. K. Teter Consulting/Resident, Village of Homer 32 Clinton Street Homer, New York 13077	Jim Dempsey, Director Cortland County Convention and Visitors Bureau 37 Church Street Cortland, NY 13045
Bernie Thoma, Senior Consultant Thoma Development Consultants 34 Tompkins Street Cortland, New York 13045	Linda Hartsock, Director Cortland County Business Development Corporation 37 Church Street Cortland, NY 13045
Forrest Earl – Geologist/Resident, Town of Cortlandville 4028 McCloy Road Cortland, New York 13045	Jude Niederhofer, Resident/Member Little York Lake Association 6062 Route 281 Little York, NY 13807

ADVISORY COMMITTEE – INITIAL MEETINGS SUMMARY

Committee members convened two meetings to discuss how the Local Waterfront Process would proceed, how information would be gathered from the public, and the process for completion of the document. The initial meeting was a scoping meeting which was attended by Kevin Millington, Coastal Resources Specialist for the Department of State, representatives from the City of Cortland, the County's Business Development Corporation, the LWRP consultant, and the rest of the Advisory Committee members. At the initial meeting, Mr. Millington reviewed the project requirements, identified waterfront issues, and transferred any additional information that would be important to the consultant in completing the Local Waterfront Revitalization Program. Those Advisory members present briefly discussed two of the major goals of the program: (1) how to maintain the natural resources of the Tioughnioga River and (2) how to increase and improve access to the River.

ADVISORY COMMITTEE – SUCCESSIVE MEETINGS

The Advisory Committee met a number of times after certain LWRP milestones were completed. For example, after the physical boundaries of the Corridor were recommended, the Advisory Committee convened to discuss the proposed area. After the Corridor's inventory was completed, the Committee met once again to discuss the findings. When draft projects and policies were proposed, once again the Advisory Committee met to discuss the contents of each.

MEETING OF MUNICIPAL LEADERS

To assure that the municipal leaders of all the riverfront communities were kept abreast of the LWRP process and progress, leaders were invited to attend a PowerPoint presentation that discussed the parameters of the LWRP and what the final deliverable would be (Corridor Plan). Thoma Development Consultants held the meeting at the Cortland County Office Building on January 20, 2005. A question and answer session followed the presentation. Municipal leaders were informed of when a local LWRP meeting would be held in their respective community and were asked to come and support the LWRP when the local meeting was held.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETINGS

River community public information meetings were held in six different communities beginning in April of 2005 and concluding in mid-May of 2005. There are twelve riverfront communities with varying sizes in population. Some communities also have very little frontage on the Tioughnioga River. It was therefore decided to combine some of the presentations made to the smaller communities into a single meeting to be held at a convenient location.

The same PowerPoint presentation made to municipal leaders was made in individual communities by Thoma Development Consultants. A question and answer session followed each presentation and the opportunity for public input into the Plan. Minutes were taken at every meeting and were compiled by the consultant for consideration when completing the LWRP document, particularly the projects and policies. Listed following is a summary of the information gathered at the meetings.

MEETING LOCATION: Cortland County Business Development Conference Room, 37 Church Street, Cortland

DATE: April 27, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- Who are the sub consultants on the project?
- Why are so many municipalities involved?
- Is it good or bad that so much of the land is under private ownership?
- What can be done about threatened species along the River?
- Why are we doing this program?
- How can we guarantee that the Corridor will be utilized?
- Will the Corridor be too diversified: age groups competing for the River?

Positive River Attributes

- The River is beautiful
- Simplicity of the River

Negative Attributes

- The River is polluted; how can we clean it up?

Recommendations for the Future

- Need to better control pollution; use buffers
- Develop road between Messengersville and Blodgett Mills
- Keep the River open and recreational
- Keep the River beautiful and simple

MEETING LOCATION: Town of Truxton, Hartnett Elementary School, Academy Street, Truxton

DATE: May 2, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- How does the project relate to Truxton?
- How does the project relate to the River Trail?

Positive Attributes

- The River provides a scenic vista from our home
- The ability to canoe and fish
- Beautiful sites along the River

Negative Attributes

- Debris along the River from people and floods
- Need more access to the River
- Lack of bicycle paths along the River

Recommendations for the Future

- Railroad beds would make good bicycle paths
- Program would help Truxton Park develop as a River access point
- Program would help downtown Truxton business
- Bicycle paths would be a safer alternative than Route 13

MEETING LOCATION: Train Station, Railroad Avenue, Village of Marathon

DATE: May 4, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- Is the program focused mainly on Cortland and Homer?
- Who is funding this program?
- What is classified as recreation?

Positive Attributes

- None noted

Negative Attributes

- Lack of parking for fisherman
- Poor access to land with fishing rights
- River needs to be cleaned up: pollution, logs, brush
- Lack of farmland management on the River

Recommendations for the Future

- Keep agricultural land for the farmers
- Create a better partnership to maintain the River

MEETING LOCATION: Community Center, Clinton Street, Village of McGraw

DATE: May 9, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- How will we handle landowners who do not want the public or a river trail on their property?
- This project will take a long time in attracting tourism to the area
- More boat launches would be beneficial
- What are the attitudes of the 12 participating municipalities?
- Did the 12 municipalities contribute towards the match?
- Does anyone currently use the River for irrigation?
- How much was the cost of the Marathon boat launch?
- Has anyone ever done a study to see if the water flow has increased or decreased over the years?

Positive Attributes

- The River is one of the best fishing streams in the State
- Canoeing on the River is very scenic and peaceful
- The River offers fishing and recreation
- It would be nice to connect the Village of McGraw's railroad bed and walking trail to the River Trail
- The river is a fairly clean waterway with good quality water
- It is a beautiful territory and a plus for tourism

Negative Attributes

- Consuming fish south of Cortland may not be healthy
- Flooding
- Garbage and trash along the riverbanks
- Not enough public access
- Flooding may have a negative impact on the new trail
- The River is not stocked well enough; private owners were asked four to five years ago to stock the River but were not interested
- Fishing holes are few and far between
- Most of the River is located on private property
- Agricultural runoff

Recommendations for the Future

- Continue to make it cleaner
- More access, more activity
- Many possibilities/opportunities to bring in tourism
- Possible walking trails from River to restaurants and hotels
- Economic development should only occur in areas with proper water and sewer so as not to add to the pollution or flooding

MEETING LOCATION: Elizabeth Brewster House, Main Street, Village of Homer

DATE: May 11, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- Is the program mainly for recreational purposes?
- Can dredging be done in Marathon and McGraw to contain flooding?
- Flooding issues should be focused upon more than recreation
- The \$50,000 from the State and the \$50,000 match is only funding the study
- Where will the Advisory Committee come from?
- The River flow needs to be improved: the River is filled in and the rubble collects debris which results in more sediment
- How do citizens get on the Advisory Committee?
- What role will the DEC play?
- Why do you mean each community has to “buy” into the LWRP?
- A guide to development needs to be added to the plan so people are aware of flooding issues
- Where will the liability fall in this program?
- What individual rights do people have who live along the River?

Positive Attributes

- Views/beauty
- Wildlife
- Fishing/ice fishing
- Boating/canoeing/kayaking
- Entertainment
- Improves quality of life

Negative Attributes

- Water quality/cleanliness
- Cost of implementation
- Flooding – significant economic loss
- Proximity to I81: Noise, view, etc.
- Mosquitoes, bugs
- Dangerous when water gets high
- Limited access
- Not enough fish/limited fish species
- Lack of management
- Albany International dam
- Security concerns/police protection
- Increased cost to the villages
- Silting
- Mining

Recommendations for the Future

- Need for better access should be studied
- Deeper water
- More control of pollution
- Potential dredging
- Use of water holes
- Comprehensive Plan implementation
- More recreation – fishing, picnicking, etc.
- More buffering of the highway
- Protection of wildlife
- Cleaner water/higher water quality
- More control over agricultural uses
- More consideration should be given to landowners' opinions
- Investigate pollution: health concerns?

MEETING LOCATION: Preble Town Hall, Preble Road, Town of Preble

DATE: May 12, 2005

Questions/Concerns

- Is farmland one of the largest land uses in the River Corridor?
- Are the lakes, such as Little York and Song Lake, included in the Corridor?
- How long have you been working on the LWRP?
- Agricultural runoff is not nearly as much of a problem as it was 20 years ago

Positive Attributes

- Scenic/beautiful
- Good exercise/recreation

Negative Attributes

- Trees, brush, pollution, etc., make it difficult to navigate the River
- Limited access
- Flooding
- Invades property owners' lands

Recommendations for the Future

- Provide more education about the River/Corridor
- Provide more access/launch points along the River
- Clean up the pollution
- Would like to see the upper branch, from Little York to Homer, remain the same

MEETINGS PLANNED FOR THE FUTURE

A series of meetings are both scheduled and planned for the near future regarding finalizing the LWRP document and moving towards adoption of the Plan. These are listed following:

Meeting Date	Subject
January 18, 2006	Advisory Committee meeting with Kevin Millington. Topics to be covered include: (1) Reviewing the final draft of the Policies and Projects; (2) Local implementation; and (3) Federal and State actions.
January 18, 2006	City of Cortland or Advisory Committee: Completion of Environmental Assessment form.
May 17, 2006	Public information meeting.
TBA	Presentation of LWRP to individual riverfront communities, if requested.