

City of Plattsburgh

Harborside Master Plan

Public Information Meeting #2 Summary Notes



Meeting Date:	Wednesday, April 27, 2022 @ 7:00pm
Location:	Plattsburgh Public Library and Via Zoom Webinar 19 Oak Street, Plattsburgh, NY
Consultants:	Bob Murphy Jr., AICP, Barton & Loguidice (B&L) Leigh Jones, PLA (B&L) Jeremy Hughes (B&L) Brian Jones, PLA, Aubertine & Currier
Public:	20 members of the public attended in-person, another 8 remotely via livestream

Bob Murphy, AICP; Leigh Jones, PLA; and Jeremy Hughes from Barton & Loguidice, DPC (B&L) hosted and facilitated the second Public Information Meeting for the Harborside Master Plan. The purpose of this meeting was to present a plan for the Environmental Learning Center and detailed site layouts for Harborside, and garner feedback from meeting participants. Mr. Murphy, Ms. Jones, and Mr. Hughes also discussed previously completed tasks of the project which included results from the virtual public meeting in February and results from the community survey.

The meeting was attended by 20 members of the public. The agenda was as follows:

- Project Status and Timeline
- Virtual Public Information Meeting Summary and Survey Summary
- Detailed Site Layout Plans and Environmental Learning Center Plans
- Committee Feedback and Discussion
- Next Steps

A recording of the meeting is available on Vimeo, and the WAMC Northeast Public Radio also discussed the contents as well as posted the recording on their page. A link to the recording of the Public Information meeting can be found here: [PIM #2](#)

1. Introductions, Ground Rules, and Project Team

Mr. Murphy walked the group through the agenda items before going through the evening's public information meeting ground rules. These included an explanation of the YouTube livestream, comments on the YouTube page, and the video recording and transcript for the hearing-impaired that will be made available.

A slideshow of the community forum is available separately for review.

2. Project Status and Timeline

The project timeline is on track. The Project Committee Kickoff, Public Workshop #1, Online Community Survey, and Public Workshop #2 having been completed.

The next steps of the project schedule includes:

- Public workshop #3: Final Designs – Summer 2022;
- Draft Plan – Summer 2022;
- CFA Grant Submission Round – Summer 2022;
- Final Draft Plan – Fall 2022; and
- CFA Grant Award Announcements – Winter 2022.

3. Virtual PIM Summary and Survey Summary

The virtual Public Information Meeting was held on November 16, 2021. Its purpose was to introduce the project to the public as well as generate and get initial feedback on the inventory and analysis of the sites and the associated preliminary concepts.

The Online Community Survey was available to the public from January 14 to January 25. During that time, 1,094 people took the survey. Participants were asked a total of 18 questions about their ideas, priorities, and concerns about the future of Plattsburgh’s Harborside site. The questions included a combination of multiple choice, ranking criteria, and some open-ended responses for issues or concerns not covered within the survey.

53% of participants said they don’t visit Harborside because there isn’t enough to do. The majority of participants (53%) stated they access Harborside Lakefront via Dock Street, with 22% using Green Street. 42% access the Riverfront Subarea via the Durkee Street Pedestrian Bridge.

65% of participants said they favor active recreation as high priority at the Lakefront. 54% favored whitewater recreation as high priority, while another 32% favored this as medium. 69% believe Harborside is lacking passive recreation. A popular open form comment was for Harborside to be appealing to people of all ages.

A full summary of the Community Survey will be posted on the project page on the City website.

4. Detailed Site Layout Plans and Environmental Learning Center Plans

Mr. Murphy handed the presentation over to site design lead Leigh Jones (B&L). She described in detail the layout plans, features, and amenities through the Harborside Lakefront and Harborside Riverfront Subareas. This included preliminary concept plans based on committee feedback, relevant previous plans, and public input. Given some uncertainty regarding site control at the NYSEG site, recommendations were reduced in complexity and scope to reflect limitations on extension site development.

Mr. Murphy then briefed the public on the reasoning and background behind the Environmental Learning Center concepts and introduced City Environmental Resources Manager Jon Ruff to discuss the origins of the concept. Brian Jones (Aubertine & Currier) took over the presentation to describe initial layout of the Environmental Learning Center as well as models and renderings.

5. Committee Feedback and Discussion

The attendees were divided into groups to review the conceptual plans more closely, discuss proposed improvements, and provide feedback on the discussion boards created by the project team. The questions were split into two categories: Harborside Layout and Environmental Learning Center. Each category had four questions for the attendees to provide feedback and discuss. Participants were also provided with green dots to place next to things they liked and red dots to place next to things they did not like. They placed as many green and red dots as they wanted. They also placed comment cards on the boards.

Harborside Layout:

1. What features / amenities at Harborside should be top priority?

- Walking paths and views ●
- Playground areas ●●
- Stage / entertainment
- Kayak / canoe / fishing access - (concerns about long-term maintenance/costs) ●
- Whitewater course - (concerns about overall costs and long-term maintenance/costs) ●
- Passive recreation and “sittable” spaces
- Other (please specify)

Comments included:

- Low maintenance should be a guiding principle of the design
- Active land use for kids (playground) with passive for adults
- Active water use

2. What groups of users does our design overlook? How so?

Comments included:

- Ensure overlooks are accessible, out over water.

3. In your opinion, how can Harborside be better connected to Downtown and nearby neighborhoods?

Comments included:

- Vehicular bridge from Cumberland Ave or City Hall Pl. to Harborside
- Connect pedestrian bridge from Macdonough Park
- Pedestrian bridge over tracks from train station on Bridge St down to site ●
- Mixed use development- housing and retail (grocery, drug store) would tie it together

4. What would make traveling to and from the Harborside area a more convenient and pleasant experience for pedestrians, bicyclists, boaters, and motorists?

Comments Included:

- Expanding accessibility at existing brick building (restrooms, laundry for boaters)

Environmental Learning Center:

1. What groups should the Environmental Learning Center (ELC) serve? How can the ELC best serve such groups?

Comments include:

- Fisherman - tournaments and day-to-day fishing
- School groups - elementary through college
- Accessibility for all ALC groups
- Canadians who dock at the marina - wayfinding needed
- Hungry people - need vendors/food trucks
- SUNY's environmental program
- Acoustic concerns of hardpan walls
- All people

2. What attribute of the ELC will keep you returning?

- Rotating/traveling exhibits
- Café/Lite Fair Concessions
- Event space such as a foyer or theater
- Elevated views of the lake and Harborside
- Other:

Other comments include:

- Events for all ages (lectures, galas, movies)
- Kid activities - spot for field trips - “Champy” Mascot
- More space on 2nd floor - more room for views
- Expand over rooftop for more exhibits
- Outdoor/trail exhibits

3. What community partners should be involved in programming and operations of the ELC? Please explain.

- SUNY Plattsburgh
- Clinton County Historical Society
- Lake Champlain Basin Program
- Champlain Valley Physicians Hospital
- Collaboration with the Wild Center (Tupper Lake) and/or ECHO (Burlington)
- Other partners and explanations:

Other feedback:

- Clinton County Community College
- Coursework for environmental program (apprentices, interns, students)
- Workforce development groups and unions
- Nova Bus- Private sector or Bombardier
- PTA Groups
- Outside art/ stand center for the arts/ Plattsburgh Blues and Jazz
- PCSD- School district
- Indoor and outdoor arts and crafts events

- Screening Fence ●●●
- Hammock Grove ●●●●●●●●

Comment Cards:

- *Benches instead of Stepped Seating along Waterfront*
- *Beach features should include dredging the Silt*
- *Look at the lake by water levels with respect to boardwalk design floodplains*

Waterfront Trail

- Waterfront Pathways with Nature Play ●●●●●●●●
- Picnic Pavilions ●●●●●●●●
- Public Art ●●●●●
- Nature Play Area ●●●●●
- Waterfront Trail Concept Plan ●●
- Hammock Grove ●●●●●●
- Sail-like Pavilion / Gathering Area ●●●●
- Sea Wall Public Art ●●●●

Comment Cards:

- *Solar “trees” along the Waterfront Pathways with Nature Play*
- *I like a subdivision and trail network along the Waterfront Trail Concept Plan*

NYSEG Site

- Fishing +Overlook Areas with River Access ●●●●●●
- River Hydraulics + Tubing ●●●●●●●●●●●●
 - *Comments Cards*
 - *Hydraulics? Very expensive and difficult to maintain and the City’s record on maintaining facilities is VERY POOR*
 - *Would Interfere with Salmon (another person agreed)*
- River Rafting + Viewing Areas ●●●●●●●●
 - *Comment Cards*
 - *I just don’t like the viewing area, but I like the water use*
 - *River Rafting will require significant engineering, DEC work, and cost*
 - *All of the River is very active fishing/salmon transit. All of the River needs to be cleaned and not disturbed*
- Grassy Knolls/Waves for Seating ●●●●●●●●
 - *Comment Cards*
 - *Just a plain hillside*
- NYSEG Concept Plan
 - *Comment Cards*
 - *Overall, Saranac River above dam slack river canoe area*

- *Look at river function how flow rates change throughout the year*
- *A Beach would be a great addition. Kids could ride to the beach and swim*
- *River above dam is slack water – would be great canoe access*
- *Active space for teens at NYSEG. Skate Park, Ropes course. Active space for seniors, exercise equipment. Need winter spaces, skate parks, sledding, curling...*
- *High water, low water, concerns*

7. Next Steps

The Consultant Team will catalog feedback from PIM #2 and adjust the plan priorities accordingly. A detailed design plan for the Harborside Area will be created as well as Environmental Learning Center Plans and a Programming Analysis. A Cost Benefit Analysis of the recommendations will be done, and a draft Harborside Master Plan will be completed in June 2022.

- Public Meeting #3
 - Scheduled for July 2022

The Harborside Master Plan Public Information Meeting #2 adjourned at approximately **7:20pm**.