

Project Advisory Committee Meeting #3
Bull's Head Brownfield Opportunity Area, Step 2 Nomination
Wednesday, August 22, 2018 / 6:00pm – 8:00 pm

Meeting Minutes

Attendees

John DeMott	(JDeMott)	19 th Ward Community Association
John Lightfoot	(JLightfoot)	Changing of the Scenes Neighborhood Association (COTSNA)
Jeannean Gardner	(JGardner)	Changing of the Scenes Neighborhood Association (COTSNA)
Scott Peters	(SPeters)	Rochester Police Department
Bill Washington	(BWashington)	Neighborhood United
Chris Bauer	(CBauer)	New York State Department of State
Rick Rynski	(RRynski)	City of Rochester, Neighborhood and Business Development
Frank Armento	(FArmento)	Fisher Associates
Michael Godfrey	(MGodfrey)	Fisher Associates
Tanya Zwahlen	(TZwahlen)	Highland Planning
M. André Primus	(APrimus)	Highland Planning

Introduction and Project Status Update

FArmento began the meeting with introductions of the members of the project team present for the meeting and an overview of the meeting agenda. In addition, FArmento reviewed the project schedule and highlighted key milestones for the remainder of the project, including two tentative Project Advisory Committee (“PAC”) meetings in November and January, a tentative public meeting in late January, and the progress of the Bull’s Head Urban Renewal Plan (“BHURP”). FArmento noted the status of the tasks for the Bull’s Head Brownfield Opportunity Area (“BHBOA”) Step 2 Nomination Study (a.k.a. the Bull’s Head Revitalization Plan).

Since the Last PAC Meeting

FArmento reviewed the progress of the project team since the last PAC meeting including the following:

- Held the first public meeting with 90+ attendees and 280 written comments
- Completed the first phase Urban Renewal Plan for the existing urban renewal area
- Inventoried key buildings and transportation issues/disparities
- Coordinated with several City/County staff and departments
- Met with key stakeholders, including residents and business owners
- Drafted an economic and market trends analysis
- Identified potential brownfield sites & underutilized sites
- Summarized key findings from the inventory and analysis
- Identified preliminary strategic sites

Public Meeting #1

FArmento presented the themes from Public Meeting #1. The themes presented to the PAC are representative of the 280 written comments received from the 90+ attendees and are detailed in the public meeting summary posted on the project website (www.cityofrochester.gov/bullsheadrevitalization). The themes include:

- Blighted / vacant or underutilized properties
- Crime / drugs / gangs
- Lack of economic development / jobs
- Transportation / traffic issues
- Historic character within the BOA
- Lack of housing for the elderly / aging in place opportunities
- Lack of owner occupancy
- Lack of green / open space
- Brownfields / environmental impacts

Bull's Head Urban Renewal Plan

RRynski described the history and evolution of the Bull's Head Urban Renewal Area ("BHURA") and the relationship of that planning process with the BHBOA planning process. The BHURA was previously identified as a priority catalyst area needing more advanced planning activities than the BHBOA, but with a planning timeframe parallel to the BHBOA. The approach for the BHURP is staged and phased with the first phase adopted by the Council in July 2018.

This first phase focused on blight removal and planning for land assembly, potential demolitions, environmental testing, and remediation. This first phase also focused on an area within the BHURA generally described as east of York Street and north of W Main Street (see meeting presentation for "Exhibit G Land Assembly Map" and "Land Assembly Target Area"). Within this area is a clustering of proposed City acquisitions around the intersection of Brown Street, West Main Street, and Genesee Street. MGodfrey noted the City has focused on these properties because environmental records indicated known and suspected environmental contamination from past uses and because of their proximity to clusters of City-owned properties. Acquisition of these properties would allow blight removal and environmental due diligence through testing to support future uses. The first phase also includes a proposed land use concept which includes a Gateway Corridor zone, Neighborhood Corridor zone, and a Community Hub Mixed-Use zone. This concept will be further refined during phase 2 of the BHURP.

The second phase of the BHURP will focus on visioning and redevelopment concepts with a goal of proposing any necessary revisions to zoning regulations to support those concepts. These concepts will partially be informed by the results of the environmental testing completed during the first phase which determines potential level of remediation and compatible future land uses. The result of both phases will be an Urban Renewal Plan that requires adoption by the Council and designation of the BHURA as an Urban Renewal District.

Key Building Inventory

FArmento presented the key building inventory approach and how this inventory is part of the BHBOA planning process. The key building inventory identifies neighborhood building assets that can be utilized to aid the redevelopment plan through strategic partnerships or through adaptive reuse. FArmento described the project team's approach to the key building inventory included a precedent review and establishing a set of criteria to evaluate buildings within the BHBOA. These criteria are detailed in the meeting presentation and include: cultural, social, economic, and historical. JLightfoot asked the project team if the key building inventory would result in recommendations to change the buildings' use. MGodfrey indicated the purpose of the key building inventory was to identify buildings that added value to the neighborhood and that the inventory did not include any recommendations for changing uses. JLightfoot also asked why the building that includes Mama Kim's Diner was not identified as a key building. RRynski noted that the key building inventory focuses on the criteria and that Mama Kim's Diner represents a desirable business in the neighborhood.

Economic & Market Trends Analysis

FArmento presented preliminary key findings from the Economic & Market Trends Analysis conducted by HR&A Advisors. Findings are detailed in the meeting presentation and were grouped into the following categories:

- Socio-economic
- Residential
- Commercial/office
- Retail
- Opportunities

Brownfield Sites

FArmento presented an overview of brownfield sites including the definition of a brownfield and the project team's approach to identifying brownfields. Brownfields are generally viewed as any property for which the redevelopment or reuse may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of an environmental contaminant. The project team reviewed existing environmental records to identify properties with known or suspected environmental

contamination. Data sources included 2009 and 2016 environmental screens, Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments, Limited Due Diligence Assessments, NYS and Federal databases, Sanborn Maps, City Directories, and Aerial Imagery.

MGodfrey presented the findings of the environmental records review with a map of individual properties categorized by a “level of concern” (low, moderate, high). These properties were categorized on a case-by-case basis using City criteria for assessing properties with known or suspected environmental contamination. Several meeting participants asked questions about the categorization of properties. MGodfrey described the environmental records review and provided examples of the three levels of concern:

- Properties with a **low level of concern** included residential properties with a historic spill incident reported to and closed by the NYSDEC.
- Properties with a **moderate level of concern** included small commercial properties with known or suspected environmental contamination.
- Properties with a **high level of concern** included past or present industrial uses, manufacturing uses, or certain properties with known environmental contamination.

Based on the findings of the environmental records review and the categorization by levels of concern, the project team evaluated properties to determine if they met the threshold for a brownfield. MGodfrey presented the project team’s evaluation with a map of potential brownfields. Any property with a high or moderate level of concern was identified as a potential brownfield. Any residential property with a low level of concern was typically not identified as a potential brownfield, although a few properties with a low level of concern were identified as brownfields on a case-by-case basis.

Underutilized Sites

MGodfrey presented an overview of underutilized sites including the rationale for including underutilized sites as part of the planning process and the project team’s approach to identify underutilized sites. Underutilized sites are generally viewed as any property that, when compared to surrounding properties, may be utilized below the highest and best use for the property. MGodfrey described the project team’s approach to identify these properties including a precedent review and the creation of a five-step methodology:

1. Properties with a low assessed value as compared to the City as a whole
2. Vacant land (properties without a building or other active use)
3. Properties where the principal use is a parking lot
4. Properties with a building that has been identified by the City as abandoned
5. Other properties that were qualitatively determined to be below their highest and best use (commonly included one-story commercial buildings with a large proportion of the property being used for parking)

MGodfrey presented a map showing the results of this five-step methodology which identified 205 parcels as potentially underutilized. Several meeting participants asked questions about the difference between vacant lands, abandoned lands, and abandoned buildings. MGodfrey clarified that vacant land is classified by the City and is devoid of any structure or use. The designation of a parcel as vacant land does not necessarily mean the land is abandoned. However, abandoned buildings are classified by the City as buildings and land which the property owner has abandoned and where there is currently no tenant or resident. A general discussion and consensus among meeting participants resulted in the desire for more information from the City regarding their classification of vacant land and abandoned buildings.

Summary of Key Findings

FArmento presented the preliminary key findings for the Inventory & Analysis phase of the BHBOA. Key findings are detailed in the meeting presentation and were grouped in to the following categories:

- Economic and Market Trends
- Land Use
- Zoning

- Land Ownership
- Parks and Open Space
- Key Buildings
- Historic Resources
- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Natural Resources
- Vacant and Abandoned Sites
- Brownfields
- Underutilized Sites

Bull's Head Vision & Goals

FArmento transitioned the PAC meeting from an overview of the activities and achievements the project team has accomplished since the last PAC meeting to a discussion on the Bull's Head Vision & Goals. As part of the BOA planning process, each BOA must include a discussion and create a unifying vision with supporting goals. FArmento presented the vision statement and corresponding goals from the BHBOA Step 1 Pre-Nomination Study and noted that both the vision statement and goals remain fairly representative of the neighborhood today. MGodfrey described how the project team and PAC are charged with reviewing the previous vision statement and goals to determine if updates are needed. CBauer supported this and followed up by describing the importance of a vision statement and goals as future projects are considered for State assistance. MGodfrey described how the project team evaluated feedback received during the 2009 Community Design Workshop and the BHBOA public meeting held in 2017 to draft a list of value statements for discussion. These value statements would then be used to guide the project team through an update of the vision statement and goals.

TZwhalen and APrimus facilitated a discussion of the value statements and documented their suggested changes. Figure 1 on Page 5 documents the PAC members suggested changes to the value statements and Figure 2 on page 6 documents additional input from the PAC. Once the PAC members provided their input on the value statements, TZwhalen and APrimus facilitated a voting exercise. Each PAC member was given three green stickers to vote on their top choice(s) for values. Their choices are documented in Figure 1 and Figure 2.

Figure 1: PAC member input on draft value statements

We Value . . .

sense of community connecting neighbors ● ●

~~multi-modal~~ **transportation** that is safe and accessible for everyone

quality public space with landscaping, seating, art, lighting, and gateway enhancements *unique* ~~farmers markets + space for community events~~

employment opportunities from new and expanded businesses ● ●

~~new~~ **development and retail** that utilizes brownfield, vacant, and underutilized land ●

historic character maintained through new development and reuse of existing buildings

homeownership programs that assist first time and current homeowners ●

diverse housing options for different age groups and income levels ● ●

green space, parks, and recreation facilities *for farmers markets and space for community events* ●

property owner accountability through *consistent* ~~increased~~ code enforcement ● ●

public safety and the efforts of RPD to *address* ~~eliminate~~ crime and *gang* ~~gang~~ violence ●

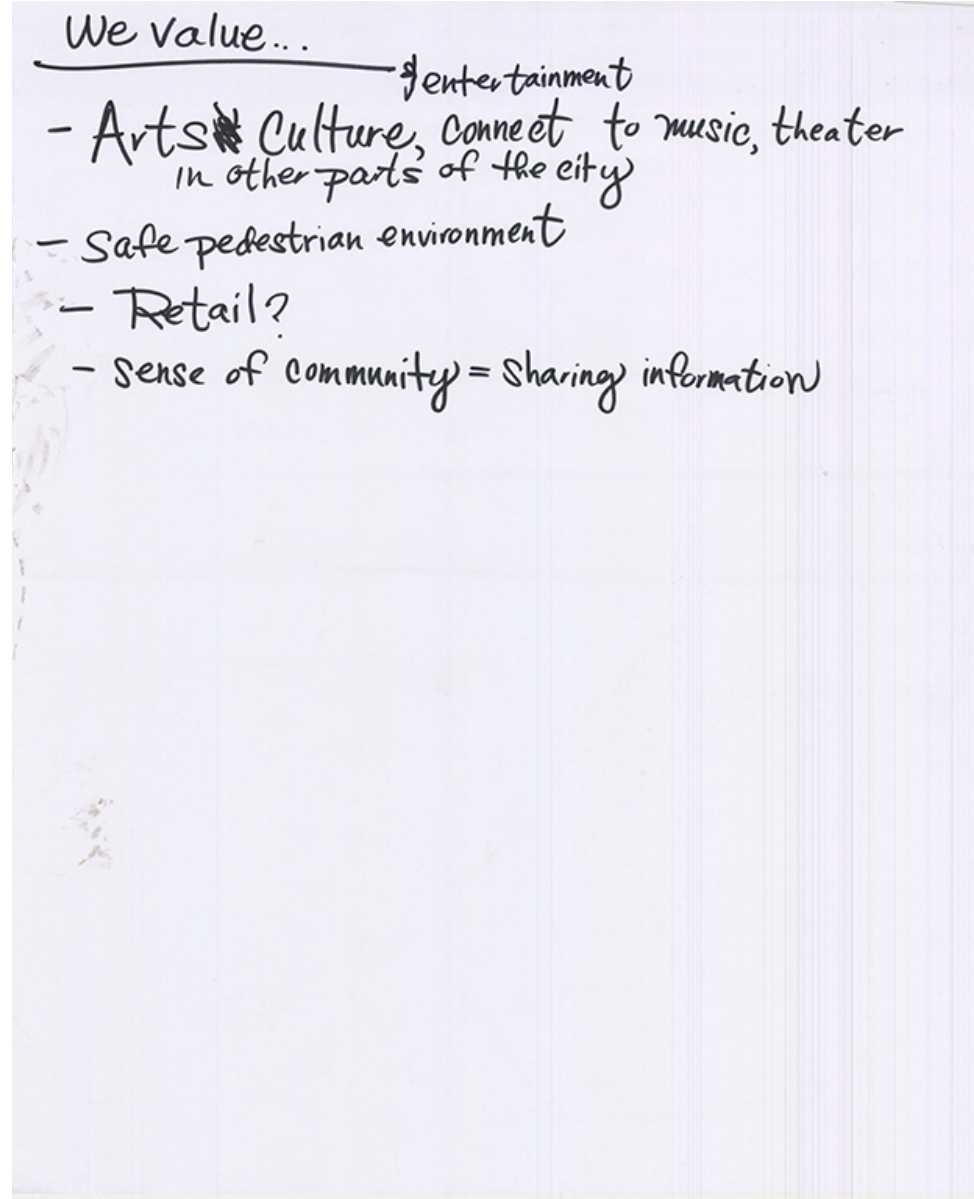
BULL'S HEAD
REVITALIZATION





This project was developed by Fisher Consulting, Inc. City of Highland and the Highland Planning Department as part of the Bull's Head Revitalization Program.

Figure 2: Additional PAC member input



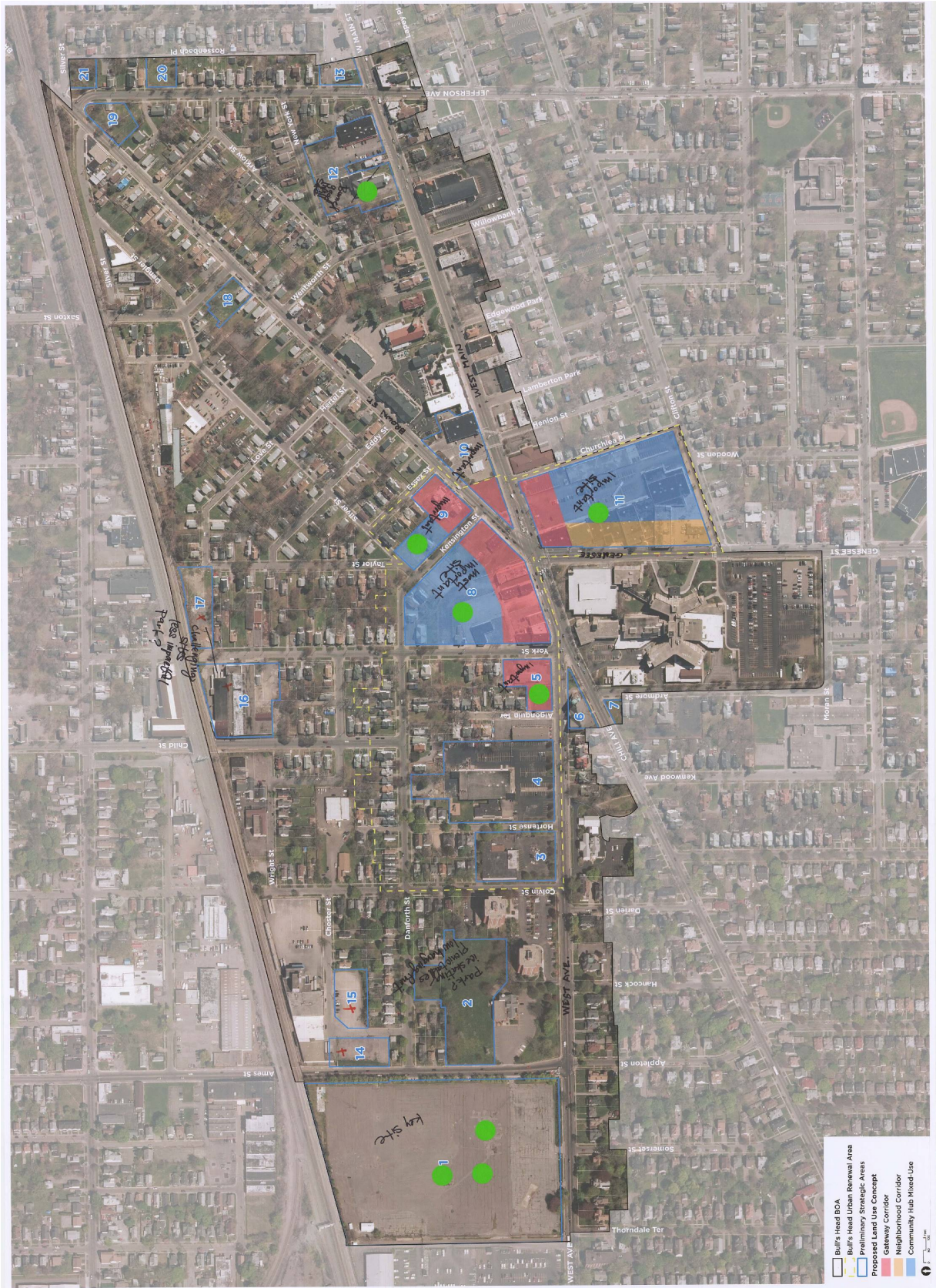
Strategic Sites and Land Uses

MGodfrey transitioned the PAC meeting to a discussion of strategic sites. MGodfrey presented an overview of strategic sites including the rationale for including strategic sites as part of the planning process and the project team's approach to identifying strategic sites. Strategic sites are any property identified in the inventory and analysis phase through which redevelopment or repurposing would further the goals of the BHBOA to create an economically and environmentally sustainable neighborhood. MGodfrey described the project team's approach to identify these sites including a precedent review and the creation of a four-step methodology:

1. Map overlay of brownfield, abandoned, vacant, underutilized, and key buildings
2. Site screening to eliminate small properties, public facilities, community services, and planning redevelopment parcels
3. Site scoring based on a series of criteria (including environmental status, site use, strategic location, adequate parcel size, and ownership status)
4. Site selection based on site scoring and properties that contain strategic or catalytic properties

TZwhalen and APrimus facilitated a discussion of the preliminary identification of strategic sites. PAC members were asked to discuss any changes they viewed were necessary and to identify any potential land uses for these sites. Figure 3 on Page 8 documents the PAC members suggested changes to the strategic sites and potential land uses. Once the PAC members provided their input, TZwhalen and APrimus facilitated a voting exercise. Each PAC member was given three green stickers to vote on their top choice(s) for strategic sites. Their choices are documented in Figure 3.

Figure 3: PAC member input on preliminary strategic sites



Next Steps

FArmento presented the next steps for the BHBOA, which included:

- Hold the second public meeting on September 6 at St. Mary's Campus
- Hold a community fair on September 8 at the Salvation Army
- Draft the Bull's Head Vision and Goals
- Draft preliminary Bull's Head Revitalization Plan recommendations
- Hold the fourth PAC meeting to discuss preliminary recommendations, date TBD

The foregoing meeting minutes represent the writer's interpretation of the proceedings of the meeting. The minutes were reviewed by the City of Rochester and by the members of the Project Advisory Committee. Please notify the City of Rochester of any additions or modifications.

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