

Downtown Redevelopment Working Committee

A VISION FOR
DOWNTOWN
.....
OSSINING



WHO IS THE DRWC?



15 community members

5 representatives from the VBOT & Village government

Represent diverse backgrounds

Our Charge:

Imagine, without limits, what could be possible
for our community

MEET OUR MEMBERS

Never doubt that
a **small group**
of thoughtful,
committed citizens
can **change the world.**
Indeed, it is the only
thing that ever has.

- MARGARET MEAD

Victoria Gearity
Mayor

Quantel Bazemore
Village Board of Trustees

Lynn Brooks-Avni
Director of Planning and Development

Stuart Kahan
Corporation Counsel

John Fry
Planning Board Member

Jeff Gasbarro
Justine Lackey
Co-Chairs

Jen Benson
Laura Carbonaro
Luis Corena
Helder Docabeco
Leilani Dooley
J Philip Faranda
Kaja Gam
Diana Lemon
Rodolfo Moran
Suzie Ross
John Van Steen
Dana White
Jon Zeltsman

OUR PROCESS



DRWC met over a period of 90 days

Entire group met one time per week; subcommittees met individually as needed

Used Facebook, email and Google docs to share information and research --

Performed a SWOT analysis

Received a zoning presentation

Participated in a walking tour

MISSION STATEMENT

The DRWC has been appointed by the VBOT, and as a group we stand for the continued revitalization of downtown. Our mission is to act as a think tank, and to collaborate with the Village Board of Trustees, business owners, and Ossining Village residents.

By the end of our 90-day tenure, we will deliver to the VBOT an actionable plan and framework for continued downtown development as well as our recommendations for an implementation timeline.

We will accomplish this by researching and exploring a variety of topics we believe will lead to accelerated, intelligent, and continued growth of our downtown. We will begin our process by looking to the existing resources available, such as the Village Comprehensive Plan and past studies.

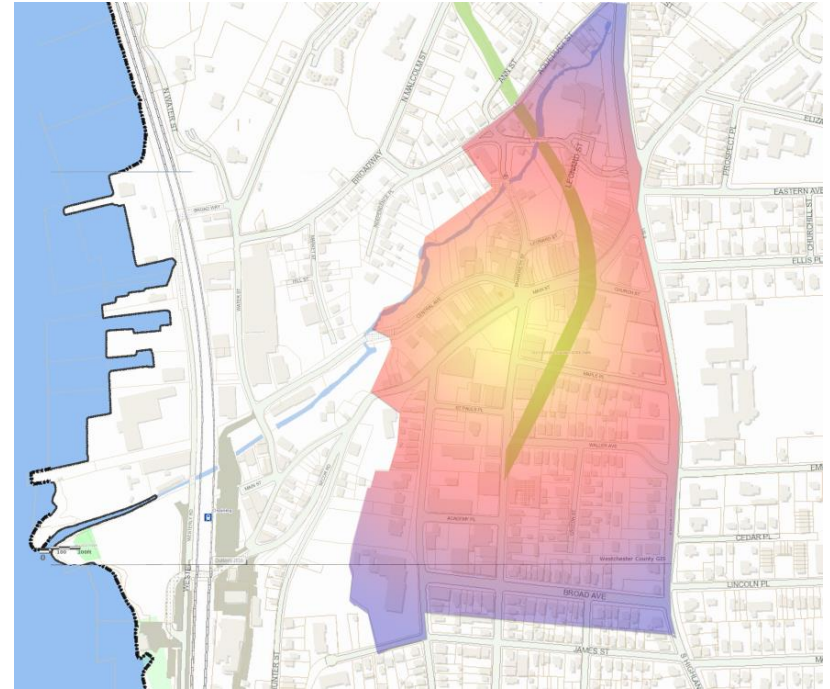
Topics of exploration include the development of public space and downtown parcels, economic and business development, transportation and parking, as well as integration of the Waterfront, Downtown, and Croton Avenue corridor.

Our desire is to grow our village while respecting existing communities and businesses and our racial and socioeconomic diversity. We are guided by our collective principles, which include sustainability, inclusivity, and creating an inviting, innovative, and aesthetically pleasing community for all.

DEFINITION OF DOWNTOWN

“Ossining’s downtown district is located in the area roughly bounded by Sing Sing Kill, State Street, Broad Avenue, and Route 9 (Highland Avenue). The heart of historic downtown Ossining consists of the long, curving block of Main Street known as the “Crescent,” which stretches from Route 9 west towards the waterfront. Ossining’s dramatic topography places downtown on a ridge plateau over 100 feet higher than the river plain of the Hudson.”

Village of Ossining Comprehensive Plan, 2009



ANALYSIS OF 2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



We looked to existing resources such as the Comprehensive Plan

Although completed in 2009, the plan contains many relevant ideas

An analysis was completed identifying 270 recommendations included in the plan, setting goals and guidance in a number of areas including the Downtown district, sustainability practices, affordable housing and more.

Many of these recommendations have been accomplished, in whole or in part.

The Comprehensive Plan serves as the foundation for zoning regulations, and as a guiding document in policy decision making.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS: KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN



Create a connection between the waterfront and the center of Downtown

Improve the intersection of Route 9 and Route 133 (Croton Avenue)

Develop parcels at intersection of Spring and Main Streets

Expand public parking, preferably with a parking garage

Improve traffic circulation throughout the Village

Examine residential zoning in and adjacent to the downtown

NEW DEVELOPMENTS



GOOD THINGS



UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS IN DOWNTOWN



80 Main

- Located at 80 Main Street, site of the old Elks Lodge
- 25 unit building
- Age restricted to 55+
- Currently under construction



Before



After

Hudson Steppe, 34 State Street

- On site of old Printex factory
- Historic Smith Robinson house to be preserved as office space
- 189 units, 18 affordable
- Innovative parking garage with 231 spaces
- Project currently stalled

UPCOMING DEVELOPMENTS IN DOWNTOWN



Ossining Children's Center

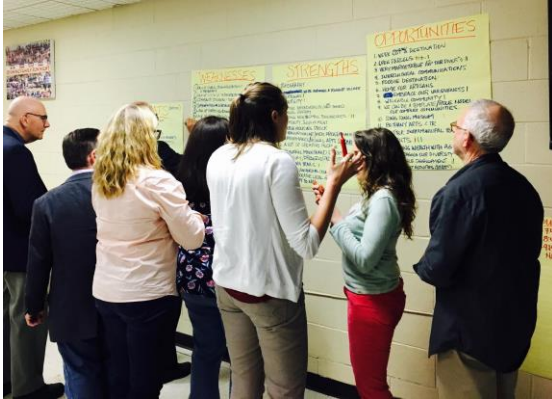
- Benefactor purchased Leach & Thomas funeral home at 32 State Street
- Property will be gifted to Ossining Children's Center for its new facility



200 Main Street

- 1908 Bank for Savings building will be repurposed as food hall and culinary center
- NYS Historic Preservation Office has commented on the plans

STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS



The SWOT Team

SWOT: Acronym for strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats

A tool often used in the strategic planning process

Results of the SWOT analysis guided the formation of the subcommittees

FULL SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS

Topography
Becoming a younger village
Rivertown
(2) **Diversity**
Relative affordability (first timers)
School system
(6) **Exciting new small businesses**
Community involvement
Diverse housing stock
Extracurricular/Kid's programming
Performance/Visual Arts
A lot of creative people
Beautiful maintained parks
(4) **History: Preserve/Promote**
Walking trails
Signature/Historical downtown churches
Collaborative local government
Proximity to NYC

WEAKNESSES

(4) **Public transportation**
 Frequency
 Limited route
Community division
 Generational
 Cultural
(1) Lack of parking
(7) **Lack of green space**
(1) High taxes
(3) Route 9 divide
Lack of commercial office space
(4) **We're not a destination**
Resistance to change/legacy Ossining
Topography
(4) **Foot traffic in downtown**
(2) Negative perception of Ossining
(2) Diversity
(4) **Lack of diverse housing stock**
(5) **Zoning Code**
(2) Lack of free/affordable kids programming

FULL SWOT ANALYSIS

OPPORTUNITIES

We are not a destination

- (7) **Open parcels**
- (2) **Very marketable (up the river)**

Intercultural communications

- (1) Foodie destination

Home for artisans

- (1) Embrace our uniqueness
- (3) **Walkable community**

We can be a template/role model
for complex communities

- (1) Sing Sing Museum

Bethany Arts Center

Better intramunicipal transportation
opportunities

- (3) **Grants**

Tapping wealth with a good
business model

- (3) **Leveraging diversity**
- (2) **Equitable development**

- (1) Waterfront activities

THREATS

Changing political landscape

- (2) **Overcrowded schools**

- (1) **Economy**

- (3) **Gentrification**

- (2) **Changing landscape of retail**

Drawing from other destination villages

- (1) **Traffic increase**

Lack of grants/outside support

Decrease in quality of education

SWOT RESULTS

From the SWOT analysis,
we created four subcommittees.



Placemaking, Open Space, & the Built Environment



Transportation & Parking



Innovative Ideas



Outside Groups & Consultants

**PLACEMAKING,
OPEN SPACE,
& THE BUILT
ENVIRONMENT**



PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Members focused on:

Empty parcels downtown

Connecting the immediate downtown to other areas of the village

Identifying underused areas not suitable for buildings
but best for public spaces

A vigorous conversation about the development of lots
at Main and Spring Street

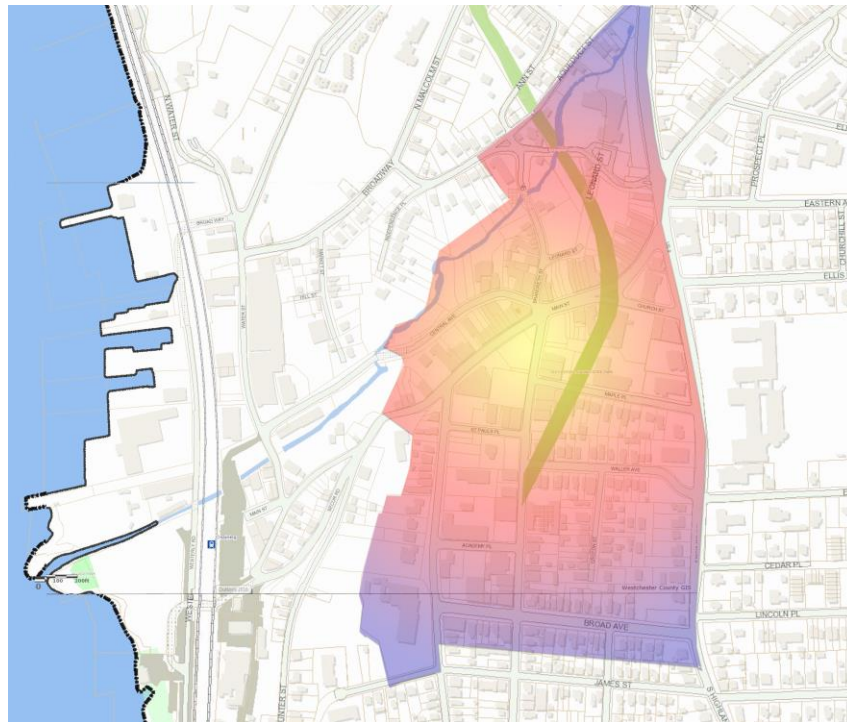
PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Developing parcels left behind
by Urban Renewal in the 1970s
is a top priority.



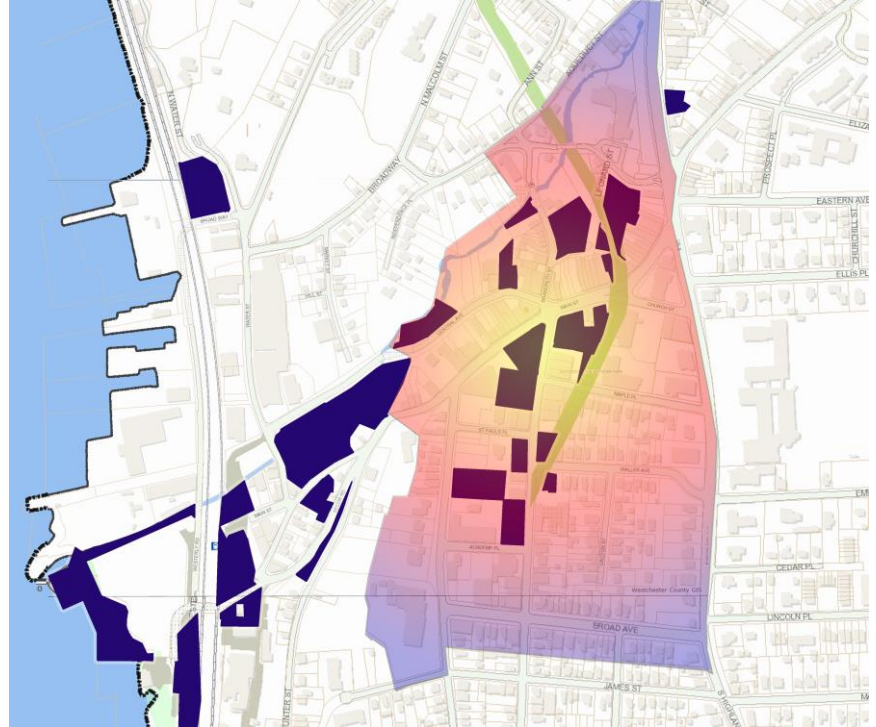
PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:

Downtown approximately
covers these areas



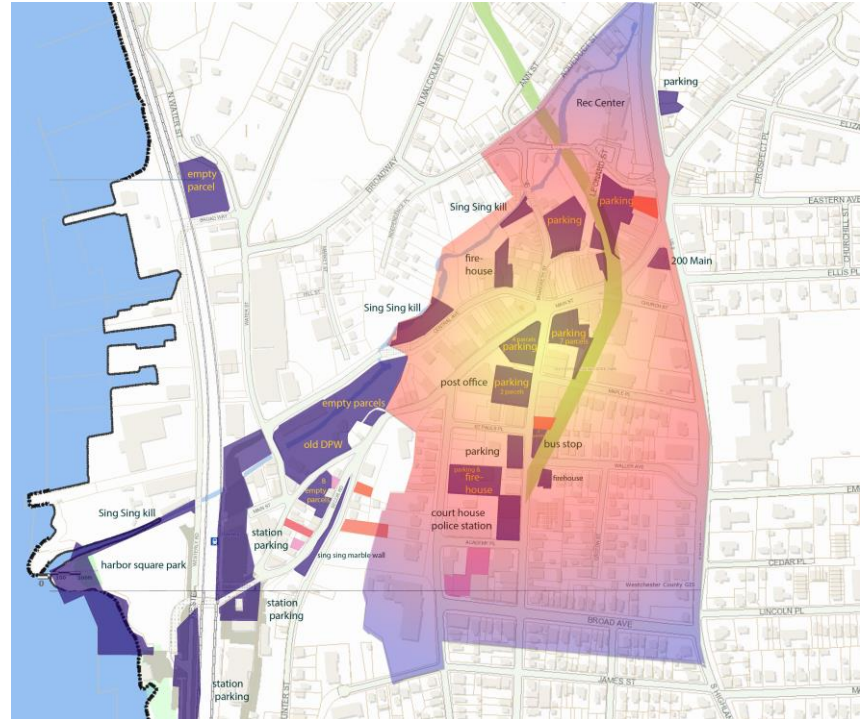
PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:

This map indicates Downtown
boundaries and vacant Village-
owned parcels.



PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:

This map includes some vacant Village-owned parcels, Village parks, parking lots, steep slopes, brown fields in need of remediation, and Village buildings.



PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT



Placemaking inspires us collectively to reimagine and reinvent public spaces as the heart of our community, strengthening the connection between people and the places we share. Placemaking refers to a collaborative process by which we can shape our public realm. It maximizes shared values of physical, cultural, and social identities that define a place and support its ongoing evolution.

A **Design Charrette** is an intensive planning session where citizens, designers and others collaborate on a vision for development. It provides a forum for ideas and offers the unique advantage of giving immediate feedback to the designers. More importantly, it allows everyone who participates to be a mutual author of the plan.

PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT:

Placemaking provides wonderful design opportunities for playful and useful public spaces.



PLACEMAKING, OPEN SPACE, & THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

Recommendations



Utilize Design Charrette(s) to envision new structures and a village green.

Facilitate the development of Charrette concepts.

Hire and fund a Downtown Manager/Business Activator.

Explore the opportunities to create a village based not-for-profit Community Development Corporation [CDC] to facilitate further downtown development

Explore form-based zoning versus traditional/Euclidean zoning.

Configure Downtown to be pedestrian-friendly.

Create “pocket parks”.

Encourage the creation of hotel, B&Bs, and other lodging facilities.

Create pop-up market in downtown.

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING



TRANSPORTATION & PARKING



Improving the experience of the Downtown and making it a vibrant village center largely depends on convenient access and parking.

Topics of Exploration:

Real and perceived issues with Village traffic and parking

Transportation alternatives such as biking, a local jitney service and ridesharing programs

Improvements to Route 9

Current meter and tag parking systems, available parking lots and the addition of a parking garage

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Observations



Traffic Flow

Enhancement/Restriping of Route 9

- One lane in each direction with center turn lane in multiple areas, center median in others
- Adjustment of traffic lights at Route 133, Route 9 and Church Street
- Introduction of parking spaces on Route 9

Influence traffic flow via diverse routes in Ossining

- Create signage to alternate routes
- Allow 2-way traffic between Croton Avenue and Broadway, creating second access route to train station

Utilization of Complete Streets program

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING

Recommendations



Parking

Rework Downtown Parking

- Examination of tag parking and meter systems
- Adjustment of pricing to reflect demand
- Installation of muni-meter type system allows more expensive parking in close proximity to business district
- Reexamination of lots and allocation of tag parking

Build parking garages in parcels outside of the central Downtown

- Utilize public/private partnership structure
- Examine multi-tiered parking structure with green space or business use on top level
- Locations: Brandreth Street lot; train station east lot

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING



Public Transportation

- Create a public ride sharing program
- Introduce a shuttle service and/or jitney

The 5 Corners Intersection

Until this study and other elements of the DRWC's final report are analyzed, the proposal for a roundabout at the intersection of Main and Spring Streets should not be reintroduced until solutions and strategies are in place for Route 9, Market Square and the use of the adjacent Post Office parking lot. The DRWC considers these the keystones to the transportation and development plan for the Village of Ossining.

The DRWC remains divided regarding the previously explored roundabout project. Any further consideration of this idea should be in the context of the broader and comprehensive plan of our Downtown.

TRANSPORTATION & PARKING



Recommendations

Reconfigure Downtown parking.

Change traffic flow by diversifying routes.

Create a public ridesharing program.

Work with NYDOT on realignment and restriping of Route 9.

Expand public transportation by introducing a shuttle service and/or jitney.

Build parking garages in parcels outside of the central downtown.

INNOVATIVE IDEAS



INNOVATIVE IDEAS



Artist Rob Niosi



“What can Ossining do to become a creative, original and forward-thinking community?”

Topics of Exploration:

Available resources and assets

What other communities have done

Strategies that can be considered “thinking outside the box.”

Brainstormed ideas that can be implemented promptly with minimal investment

Listened to Ossining residents who desire regular Downtown programming and local entertainment

INNOVATIVE IDEAS



Recommendations

Strengthen Downtown and waterfront programming

Hold more special events, including:

- An all-day 4th of July celebration on Main Street
 - Pop-up holiday market
 - Art and Skate festival
 - Holiday windows competition for local businesses
 - Cardboard wars event
 - Expanded musical performances
-

Explore internship/employment partnership between Ossining High School students and local business owners

INNOVATIVE IDEAS



Recommendations

More public art

Provide free WiFi access downtown

Develop a Local Currency and/or Time Bank

Create an Ossining APP in conjunction with a comprehensive marketing campaign

Identify a multi-use space Downtown

OUTSIDE GROUPS & CONSULTANTS

Outside organizations and consultants can support development projects and economic revitalization programs.

Subcommittee identified three organizations with unique approaches, philosophies, and expertise that could assist the Village with continued redevelopment of Downtown.



OUTSIDE GROUPS AND CONSULTANTS



Congress for the New Urbanism

Leader in best practices for development

National leader in the development of form-based zoning codes



Main Street America

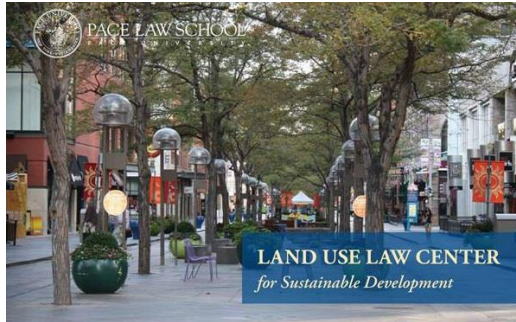
Founded 38 years ago as a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Four pillars of a Main Street America program are: Organization, Promotion, Design, and Economic Vitality.

Volunteer committees are formed around each of these four pillars.

A Main Street America program focuses on developing under-utilized spaces and aims to achieve a more-beneficial business mix.

OUTSIDE GROUPS AND CONSULTANTS



Pace University Land Use Law Center

Affiliated with Pace Law School, established in 1993

Dedicated to fostering the development of sustainable communities

Promotion of innovative land use strategies and dispute resolution techniques

Specializes in best practices for sustainable development with a focus on environmental and social value

OUR FUTURE



The DWRC believes that the Village of Ossining is turning a corner and that we have an unprecedented opportunity to set the stage for a robust comeback. It's a very exciting time!

CONCLUSION: POSSIBILITIES ABOUND

Build momentum: Implement any quick and easy action items suggested in this report.

Engage outside organization(s) and/or consultant(s).

Create strong, effective partnerships with local organizations such as the Downtown Development Fund Council, IFCA, Greater Ossining Chamber of Commerce, etc.

Create additional volunteer opportunities for deep exploration and implementation of subcommittee recommendations (possibly in conjunction with outside organizations).

Provide continuing opportunities/mechanisms for public to engage with village government on the Downtown development process.

VBOT should annually review the recommendations of the DRWC and report on their status

WRITTEN REPORT AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION



In addition to this presentation, the DRWC has compiled a report that includes:

Detailed exploration and information on all of the topics included in this presentation

A deep dive into each subject covered by subcommittees and their recommendations

Maps of downtown boundaries and vacant parcels

Comprehensive Plan analysis which details the 270 recommendations included in the plan

A “library of links” documenting the web sites shared by the DRWC

Full SWOT Analysis

SPECIAL THANKS AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Mayor Gearity and the Village Board of Trustees

Lynn Brooks-Avni, Director of Planning and Development

Stuart Kahan, Corporation Counsel

John Fry, Planning Board Member

Dana White, Village Historian, Additional Imagery

Each Member of the DRWC

Jim Drohan Jr, Drone Photographs

KH Creative Inc , Presentation Design

Chris Soi, Ossining Recreation Center

Paul Fraioli, Village Engineer & Interim Village Manager

YOU and every engaged citizen in Ossining

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A recording of this presentation will be available on the Village web site tomorrow, as well a copy of this slideshow presentation.

For questions, comments or feedback please
email downtown@villageofossining.org.

Take our DRWC Survey here: tinyurl.com/OssiningDRWC

A VISION FOR DOWNTOWN OSSINING

