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**Town of Esopus and Scenic Hudson**  
**Esopus Riverfront – Access and Connections Study**  
**Riverfront Project Committee March 27, 2019 – Kick off Meeting**  
**MEETING NOTES**

**Attendees:**

*Riverfront Project Committee (RPC):* Mercedes Ross, RPC Chair; Shannon Harris, Supervisor; Kathie Quick, Town Board Liaison; Amy Cahill; Margaret Phelan; Eli Schloss; Carol Carson Tomassetti; Dale Wolfield; Marion Zimmer; Diane Dintruff; Susan Barbarisi; Lisa Mance, Secretary; Nancy Beard, NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary; Heather Blaikie, Scenic Hudson, Rita Shaheen, Scenic Hudson.

*Planning Team:* Matthew Rogers, Senior Planner, Laberge Group; Joshua Westfall, AICP, Planner, Laberge Group.

*Guest:* Chet Allen

**Meeting Notes**

The meeting was called to order by Chairwoman Ross at 6:38.

***Review of Project Scope and Schedule and NYSDEC-Estuary Program grant Coordination***

- Supervisor Harris thanked Nancy Beard from NYSDEC-Estuary Program for her attendance that evening and the opportunity that will be given to the Town as a result of this grant funding opportunity.
  - Replying to Supervisor Harris, Nancy Beard shared her enthusiasm related to the project with the group and complimented the turnout that evening.
- Chairwoman Ross continued with the first item on the Agenda- Introductions. All in attendance introduced themselves to the group.
- Chairwoman Ross then handed the meeting to Matt Rogers who gave a brief background of the NYSDEC Hudson River Estuary Program, from which this project is being funded.
- For clarification, Matt Rogers asked Nancy Beard if access projects at Perrine’s Bridge Park on the Wallkill River could be included in this Project. Nancy Beard stated this property was not eligible as it was out of the tidal influence area of the Hudson River, being influenced by dams’ up-river.
- With that clarification Matt Rogers began a brief review of the project scope and timeline as provided in an email sent to Chairwoman Ross on Friday March 22, 2019. During this discussion, questions arose as to the timing of specific tasks and items.

- Rita Shaheen questioned if Task 4 – Preparation of the full plan could be condensed. Mr. Rogers stated this was due to the many variables of the public outreach session, the task of preparing drafts, time needed by all parties to review the draft document.
- Heather Blaikie also questioned the timeline in regards to Task 3 – Public Outreach. Heather Blaikie requested specific dates for the upcoming public Meetings. Matt Rogers stated that he will work with the RPC to identify possible dates for initial public meetings.
- Supervisor Harris asked Matt Rogers about modifying the project timeline in a way that it would allow the Town to apply to the Estuary Grant on the next cycle. Matt Rogers was unsure of the ability of the Town to submit at the next cycle and deferred to Nancy Beard with Estuary. Nancy Beard stated that it was unlikely the Town could secure an implementation grant 1) due to having an open grant, and 2) the project would not be finalized. Supervisor Harris expressed her desire to move the project forward as fast as possible. Nancy Beard stated that if all goes as planned on this project, the Town would be eligible to submit to NYSDEC for implementation in the calendar year 2020 grant cycle.
- Supervisor Harris then asked Matt Rogers if a few specific items could be moved up on the timeline. Particularly, Supervisor Harris asked if the scheduled June Public Information Meeting #1 could be moved up to May 2019. Additionally, the Supervisor asked the RPC and Matt Rogers if it was reasonable to move up the Stakeholders Meetings into April. The RPC found this agreeable. Matt Rogers stated that he would update the schedule based on the discussion and distribute to the RPC.
  - Follow-up: Public Meeting #1 will be held on May 22. The schedule would not allow for Stakeholder meetings in April. They will begin in May.

### ***Inventory and Analysis Elements***

- Josh Westfall read and described the Draft Inventory and Analysis Elements, as distributed to Chairwoman Ross on Friday March 22, 2019.
  - During the review, Matt Rogers ask for clarification and guidance from Heather Blaikie on what was the ideal method/number to use for sea level rise. After some brief discussion, Heather Blaikie indicated that it was ideal to use depth not linked to time. It was agreed that planning should be done to accommodate up to 21” of sea level rise, which would create varying depth dependent on location.
- Nancy Beard suggested that underwater lands ownership be included as this was an important consideration and this ownership would determine permit types needed for any construction into the water, off the shoreline. Underwater ownership will be added to the list of Elements. There was an understanding among the Committee that confirming underwater ownership can be difficult, however, it is assumed that the State of NY (OGS) owns the underwater lands of the Hudson River. All attempts to confirm ownership will be made.
- Additional suggestions by the RPC:
  - Water trail connections should be added, including the Greenway Water Trail.
  - It was also suggested the Sojourner Truth Trail be added when appropriate.
- Josh Westfall continued the review of Surrounding Land Narrative and Associated Maps, which would also include the additions of nearby land and water trails, including the Greenway Water Trail and the Sojourner Truth Trail.
- Lastly, Josh Westfall read the listing of the Existing Documentation Review which would support this project. Laberge Group provided a listing of five documents, the RPC also felt it desirable to add Scenic Hudson Habitat Maps.

### ***Project Stakeholders***

- Matt Rogers requested confirmation from the RPC as to who they would like to identify as Key Stakeholders. Laberge Group provided a draft list of possible stakeholders to Chairwoman Ross on Friday March 22, 2019, based on previous RPC discussion. The draft list identified 23 potential Stakeholders.
- Matt Rogers asked what role the West Esopus Land Owners would play in being a community Stakeholder. It was decided that they would most likely be interested in the plan due to their fishing activities, Lake Katrine Rod and Gun Club was also identified in this capacity.
- Supervisor Harris asked that the Tourism Task Force be a Key Stakeholder and not the whole Town of Esopus Economic Development Committee.
- It was also discussed that Kayak Vendors/Users be expanded to include all paddling groups.
- Additional Key Stakeholder recommended by the RPC:
  - Esopus Recreation Commission (Esopus Parks and Recreation Committee)
  - Private Marinas (Certified Marina, Jeff's Yacht Haven, and the Rondout Yacht Basin)
  - Ulster County Planning Dept.
  - Riverview and Rondout Harbor Condominium Associations
  - Watershed Groups
  - Rondout (Neighborhood in Kingston) Revitalization Groups
  - The Esopus Business Alliance (EBA)
  - Relevant Private Property Owners
  - Holy Cross Monastery

### ***Future Access Sites***

- The RPC discussed possible future access sites and identified the following site for consideration:
  1. Connelly: Center Street ROW at Jeff's Yacht Club (Private)
  2. Connelly: Rondout Yacht Basin/Plantasie Creek adjacent lands (Private)
  3. Sleightsburgh: Town-owned North Broadway/Pump Station (Public)
  4. Eddyville: North of New Salem Rd. along the Rondout Creek (Private)
  5. Port Ewen: Aarjen Dev. Corp. Property – Between the Wurtz St. and Rt. 9W Bridge (Private)
- These identified locations will require further vetting until a determination is made of site suitability. In addition, permission from each private land owner will be needed prior to conducting site visits.

### ***Site Visits***

- The RPC confirmed site visits will occur on Monday, April 8 (weather permitting). Details about the site visits will be provided to the RPC via email.

### ***Meeting Adjourned***

The RPC Kick-Off meeting adjourned at 8:20.

Meeting Notes Submitted by Laberge Group April 3, 2019