

Part 3 - Third Stage Process and Results

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Action Strategies Prioritized

Presentation: Results of the first two workshops,
And Design Studies and Recommendations

Workshop Three

The third workshop was held on August 7th, 2012 at the Oxford Primary School's multi-purpose room from 7 to 9 p.m. Approximately thirty people were present at the workshop. This workshop focused on design strategies that would contribute to fulfilling several of the vision goals.

Activity One – Prioritize action strategies

The purpose to encourage participants to read all the action strategies and select those they feel are the priorities, short and long term. Action Strategies are projects that should contribute to achieving the Vision Plan. Each participant was asked to prioritize their 6 short term action strategies using 6 yellow dots and 6 long term using 6 green dots

Summary Results: The results were prioritized and documented according to each of the six goals. For full results see the documentation at the end of this section.

1. *Strengthen the long tradition of community engagement and sense of community to guide Oxford's future.*
 - *Priority Action: Develop a method for Oxford organizations to communicate and network more effectively with each other and community projects. members as a way of exploring the potential for shared resources and projects*
2. *Establish a locally based economy that is creative, diverse and sustainable and provides employment opportunities for a range of skill and education levels.*
 - *Priority Action: Commence a transparent and respectful process of facilitated community dialogue about hydraulic fracturing as part of the economic development plan for the Town.*
3. *Promote care and maintenance of public and private properties*
 - *Priority Action: Establish a program to match volunteers (individuals, clubs/organizations, contractors, school programs) with people who need help to maintain their homes and yards.*
4. *Reinforce the village as the pedestrian civic, social, historic and retail heart of the Oxford community.*
 - *Priority Action: Develop a downtown core marketing strategy focused on visiting, shopping, and living in the village.*
5. *Cultivate the talent, energy and ideas of Oxford's youth and young adults as essential to Oxford's present and future.*
 - *Establish a small business development office or agricultural business incubator and seek assistance from the Small Business Administration, the Whitman School at Syracuse University, or other agencies or universities*

6. *Promote sustainable use of the natural and cultural resources that will contribute to the long term economic, social and environmental*
 - *Seek assistance from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to develop a flood mitigation strategy that addresses the impact of development practices and to the extent possible relies on green infrastructure.*

Presentation

The PowerPoint presentation began with a brief overview and summary of the first two workshops and the findings.

The second portion of the presentation focused on the revision of the vision and goals. At the second workshop the community members were asked to make comments and revisions on the draft vision and goals. Revisions were made based on these comments received from participants. Also introduced was how to create action steps for getting started with implementation of action strategies.

The final portion of the presentation focused on exploring alternative ways of achieving the vision through design studies of the Route 12 corridor, Chenango River corridor and the Downtown core. In this section the basic design principles were introduced, there was specific focus on what makes a great Main Street or Village downtown. The students presented the analysis and planning recommendations which the participants later reviewed in more depth in poster format.

The Route 12 corridor

At the second workshop community members identified concerns and opportunities of the Route 12 corridor. The proposed design study uses the design principles: 1. Entry and arrival sequence along Route 12 that highlight the views and rural landscape and then encourage drivers to slow down and stop in the village core. 2. Pedestrian-oriented village core that reflects the scale and detail of a traditional “main street” and downtown business district. Proposed elements includes\:

- Continuous building fronts that respect the historic character of Oxford
- Sidewalks along Route 12
- A Tree lawn buffer between the sidewalk and the road
- Pedestrian scale lighting

The Chenango River Corridor

At the second workshop community members identified access points, concerns and opportunities within the river corridor. The data was then analyzed and utilized in the creation of design recommendations. The Design Principles that are used in the solutions include: 1. Entry and arrival sequence along Route 12 that highlights the views and rural landscape and then

encourage drivers to slow down and stop in the village core. 2. A pedestrian-oriented village core 3. A stronger and positive visual and physical relationship with the Chenango River while acknowledging the challenges of flooding. 4. A system of pedestrian and bicycle connections within and between the village core and the countryside. The River Corridor Recommendations:

- A River walk
- Improving pedestrian connections
- A pedestrian truss bridge
- Expanding parks and recreational facilities
- Better utilizing the riverside commercial district
- Flood mitigation strategies.

The Downtown Core

Historical maps of the original buildings and new buildings informed and shaped the recommendations for the downtown core. The Design Principle used: 2. A Pedestrian-oriented village core that reflects the scale and detail of a traditional “main street” and downtown business district. The pedestrian environment and the visual character have been greatly affected as a result of where building facades along the street have either receded or disappeared entirely over time resulting in a loss of continuity along the street. The analysis of the pedestrian environment in the downtown area shows that the whole downtown area falls within ¼ mile, a comfortable walking distance that typically takes about 5 minutes.

The design recommendations include:

- Enlarging Lafayette Park
- Creating a continuous street frontage
- Creating a river walk and open space network
- Improving pedestrian connections
- Re-use and Revitalization of underutilized buildings
- Improving quality of life and meeting the needs of the community.

Activity Two: Review and comment on the design studies

The purpose of this activity is to provide the opportunity for participants to see the design studies up close, ask questions and make comments. Note takers recorded all of the comments made by participants.

Summary Results: Flooding still is one of the main concerns within the community that affects all three of the design study areas. Several community members thought that the flooding issue needs to be dealt with first. Community members were enthusiastic about the idea to make

Oxford a pedestrian friendly environment. Many participants also thought that expanding Lafayette Park to its historical size would make the park more user friendly for events.

Design Study Comments: Chenango River

- *Several agreed that the River should be used for water power to produce energy for the village*
- *Major concern is how to control the flooding, “That’s the first priority”*
- *Dave Emerson, a local engineer, has already produced a plan for the river*
- *River walk loop with the Truss bridge is a great idea.*
- *Pedestrian friendly environment is great*
- *Community needs to implement the action strategies*
- *Flooding issue should also involve Norwich in the planning*

Design Study Comments: Downtown Core

- *Several people expressed excitement about Lafayette Park renovation and making the downtown more pedestrian friendly.*
- *Expanding Lafayette Park will make it a more useable space, will allow for concerts in the park.*
- *Moving the fountain so the park isn’t cut in half makes sense*

Design Study Comments: Rt. 12 Corridor

- *Job #1 Flood Mitigation*
- *Bike and pedestrian ways with pedestrian size lighting is a great idea*
- *Concerned with the money to fund these projects- grants are available through state funding*
- *Parking on Route 12 was a concern- If there is Hydrofracking there will be lots of traffic on Rt. 12*
- *Pedestrian oriented village will boost economics, make people healthier and ride the bike into downtown*
- *Concerned with new Zoning regulations- Christine reassured her that minor changes will be made: such as setbacks will be added to the existing zoning*
- *Narrowing Route 12: DOT smart design, which allows you narrow the lanes in Historic Villages*

Implementation Survey

The purpose of the implementation survey is to generate a list of community member’s interest in further levels of involvement with the planning processes. As the Oxford Vision Plan moves forward, successful Implementation will rely on continued citizen participation and support.