

## **Steering Committee Meeting # 1 held in the Town Hall January 8, 2009**

### Issues / Opportunities

#### *Johnson City*

- Residential - Allow medical offices/offices by Special Permit
  - UMA building on circle
- A lot of non-conforming properties - due to code req. for lot sizes
- Industrial zoning for 20 homes is a problem
- If 50% is setback remainder can do the same
- No lighting standards
- Historic / properties / districts

#### *Endicott*

- Single family homes being converted to multi-family dwellings - absentee owners
- Historic / properties / districts

#### *Union*

- Home occupation regulations need help (landscaping businesses are not appropriate)

#### *General*

- Improve traffic flow and operations
- Corner lot setbacks caused a lot of variances awhile ago
- General dissatisfaction with appearance of commercial district
- Stay away from editorial phrases

## **Zoning Workshop held in George Korutz Justice Building February 26, 2009**

### Strengths

- History
- Churches / Architecture
- Walkable community - services downtown / sidewalks
- Diversity of restaurants
- Little traffic congestion
- Health facility – serves as an employer & a draw
- Surrounded by natural beauty (scenic)
- Small town feel, courteous, friendly
- Ethnic diversity
- Identifiable central business district, manageable scale, walkable
- Almost adequate mass transit service
- School District
- Comfortable neighborhoods
- Senior Center

### Weaknesses

- Empty storefronts
- Too many levels of government (Johnson City & beyond)
- Lack of tax base
- Vacancy for rental housing
- Older housing stock
- Poorly maintained housing
- Empty commercial & industrial properties
- Commercial areas not green enough / poorly laid out
  - Muffler shop on Main Street
  - Commercial near cemeteries
- Varying development standards
- Lack of guidelines for Main Street
- Poor signage throughout
  - Left up way too long
- Harry L Drive - problematic / business appearance
- Mismatched houses into marginal commercial areas - Harry L. Drive
- (Westover) people park on sidewalks / front yards, etc. (Endwell Street)
- Vacant Endicott Johnson buildings
- Health facility is physically constrained - wants to be a good neighborhood
- Unsafe reputation for Main Street at night (perception / reality) (unpopular)
- Buses stopping in downtown is bad for downtown merchants / location of Transit stops
- Changing Demographics
  - Declining population
  - Aging population

- Cost of handicap accessibility for older buildings
- Non-taxable properties (too many in JC)

#### Opportunity

- Safety perception
- Good architecture practices
- Balanced w/preservation of character & key design elements (just because it's old doesn't mean it's historic)
- Wal-Mart draw for central business district
- Real estate values are generally low
- Better / more efficient maintenance of public properties

#### Threats

- Saving old buildings at expense of investment & community development
- Conversion of 1<sup>st</sup> floor commercial to church, residential or office in downtown
- Poorly behaved tenants above downtown stores
- Out of town real estate owners in central business district - lack of local understanding
- Lack of funding resources
- Wal-Mart is a threat - won't help central business district (not consistent w/small town feel)
- Recession

## **Zoning Workshop held in Town Hall February 28, 2009**

### Strengths

- NBT Bank in Johnson City - good reuse of old building
- Tioga State Bank Development
- Hooper Rd. Bridge
- Parks
- Quiet & peaceful neighborhoods
- Safe neighborhoods - in part-town area
- Town services:
  - Garbage, snow removal
  - Parks (preserve, maintenance)
  - Good value
- Neighborhoods free of commercial activity
- Flood control in some areas of town
- Flood areas are used as recreational uses
- Access to goods & services by car
- Good transit service

### Weaknesses

- Out of town property owners - absentee landlords
- Property conversions from single family to multi-family units
- Modifying corner lot setbacks to 30' for both street frontages
- Recreational vehicle parking/use
- Traffic congestion due to recreational usage during summer months
- Light spillover in recreation areas (Endicott)
- Vacant factories
- Lack of maintenance of un-occupied factories
- Parking all over properties
- Vacant commercial properties

### Opportunities

- More walkable
- Quality economic development
- Use property code to town's advantage to improve building appearance
- Large scale development should provide modeling for visual impacts during review process
- Design standards

### Threats

- Vacant factories
- Out of town property owners
- Conversion of single family homes to multi family
- Vacant commercial properties = blight

## **Zoning Workshop held in American Red Cross Building March 4, 2009**

### Strengths

- Still have nice residential areas
- Decent number of redevelopment opportunities
- Lighting district (low cost)
- Historic districts in Village (Downtown / IBM / North side company houses, etc.)
- Best intact company town in state (JC is 2<sup>nd</sup>)
- Best buy for small or developing businesses - most do not have triple-net leases
- Decent access to highways
- Municipal infrastructure in relatively good shape
- Paid fire/police
- Walkable community
- Empire zone
- School District

### Weaknesses

- Inconsistent shoveling of sidewalks
- Small residential lot sizes
- Limited commercial development area (size 3.2 miles)
- Ground pollution (vapor intrusion systems common)
- Low real estate values
- Age of buildings = Old + no income to upgrade
- Absentee Landlords
- Appearance of village
- Single family conversion
- Graffiti
- Maintenance of properties is poor
- Safety (customers not feeling safe; especially at night)
- Poor lighting of avenue
- People don't gather along the avenue anymore
- East part of county competes with west side for businesses - Town & Villages do as well

### Opportunities

- Services, infrastructure is an opportunity to catalyze change
- Decline is/could be an opportunity
- Parking for tenants to encourage residential usage of upper floors / to create a single economic system along the avenue - need to create overnight parking
- Ithaca Commons
- Look at town & villages as a single entity
  - Take holistic approach
  - Unified code is an asset
- Improve communication between legislative boards & enforcement officers

## Threats

- Increasing Crime (real or perceived)
- Loss 40,000 jobs in 60 year period
- County population is declining
- Village population down from 24K to 13K
- Aging population
- Skilled labor is limited
- Dumping place for poor from downstate/metro area
- Poor maintenance of properties
- Lack of consistent code enforcement

## **Zoning Workshop held in Endwell Fire Station March 5, 2009**

### Strengths

- People in the neighborhoods are friendly
- Safe, quiet (you can leave garage open all night)
- Parks
- Natural terrain / hills
- Trees that remain (many are already cut down or are gone)
- Ethnic neighborhoods / eateries
- Close proximity of goods, services, & work
- Traffic not a problem
- Good schools
- Health care center
- Cultural activities
- Sidewalks / walkable

### Weaknesses

- Vacant buildings are eyesore
- People from elsewhere coming to area bringing area down (out of town tenants)
- Poorly maintained properties
- Lack of code of enforcement
- Creeping commercialism (destroying neighborhoods)
- Lack of unity between three communities
- Need residents to be more aware of planning/zoning efforts
- Poor transition between single family & multi-family units
- Absentee landlords
- Illegal residential conversions
- Commercial uses are everywhere - no discernable land use framework
- Population is shrinking/commercial uses are expanding
- Lack of noise ordinance
- Property taxes very high