

2014

Supplement III to the Township of Irvington NJ Transit Village Application Transit Village Visioning Session



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NJ Department of Community Affairs
Local Planning Services

9/25/2014

Amended 10/27/2014

Background:

In 2010 the City of Irvington filed a Transit Village Application with NJDOT but when follow-up questions came from the application review but there was not adequate staff support to finalize the designation. On September 11, 2011 the City of Irvington unanimously passed a Complete Streets resolution. On March 12, 2013 the City of Irvington unanimously passed a resolution authorizing filing and application for Transit Village Designation

In 2013 NJDCA Local Planning Services prepared a Transit Village Application for the Township of Irvington which was reviewed by the members of the Transit Village Task Force. After the review by the Task Force members, a meeting was held with Susan Weber and Leroy Gould of NJDOT and the Local Planning Services project team members.

At that meeting Leroy and Susan presented some questions from the Transit Village Task Force about Irvington's application and it was agreed that Local Planning Services would prepare a Supplement to the Transit Village Application to answer those questions.

On March 28th 2014 Local Planning Services prepared a Transit Village Application Supplement which was submitted to the Transit Village Task Force. The Task Force met and there were still some outstanding questions regarding Irvington's Transit Village Application. In response to questions about zoning in the proposed Transit Village, Local Planning Services and the Township of Irvington amended the Transit Village boundary to exclude any zoning where auto dependent uses were permitted (B-2, B-3, and B-4).

After transmitting the new Proposed Transit Village Boundary Map it was discussed by the Transit Village Task Force and it was agreed that Leroy Gould, Vivian Baker and representatives of Local Planning Services would go to Irvington and meet with the new mayor, Mayor Tony Vauss, and the Township Planner to review any unsolved issues and questions.

On September 9th, 2014 the meeting with the Township of Irvington was held. At this meeting the Township provided additional information answering the Task Force questions and the Mayor reiterated his commitment to pursuing the Transit Village Designation and their commitment to compact, mixed use, transit oriented development.

The 2013 Application and the Application Supplement are incorporated into and amended by Supplement II. The 2014 Supplement II had 5 sections that addressed the open items with the Township of Irvington Transit Village Application.

After review of Supplement II, the Transit Village Task Force requested that Irvington hold a **public visioning session** about the Transit Village application. This public visioning session was held on Saturday October 18th. This Supplement III to the application presents the visioning session and its results. At the visioning session the City of Irvington invited stakeholders in the community to participate in a public visioning session about both the Transit Village and overall economic development of Irvington. The following is the invitation that was sent out to community stakeholders and the public at large.



**Public Visioning Meeting
Comprehensive Economic**

Development Strategy & Irvington Transit Village

Saturday, October 18, 2014

9 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Township of Irvington

1 Civic Square

Council Chambers

Topics and Facilitators:

CEDS

Alex Rivera, Senior Fellow

Thomas Edison College

Transit Village

Robert Tessler, Local Planning Services Director

NJ Department of Community Affairs

Contact: Wayne Bradley

973-399-6657

Breakfast Will Be Served



Transit Village Visioning Session

Just over 40 stakeholders attended the meeting which was run by the Mayor and supported by some City Staff, the Council President and an Essex County Freeholder. The sign in sheet for the visioning session is attached to this document.

The Department of Community Affairs facilitated the focus group session and followed the attached agenda. Wayne Bradley, the Director of Community Development, opened the session by introducing the Mayor and the Transit Village Application and economic development strategy topics. He also explained the high density mixed use nature of transit villages.

Next, Mayor Vauss spoke and thanked everyone for attending. He spoke about his initiatives to keep Irvington safe and clean and about his support of the Transit Village. He went on to say that it is up to the residents in the community to make a difference and to work together to make Irvington what it could become.

Ramond Joseph and Bob Tessier from the Department of Community Affairs facilitated the discussion and explained the current projects in the Transit Village detailed in Supplement II as well as the proposed streetscape improvements. Mr. Tessier asked the stakeholders attending the meeting for their suggestions and comments on zoning, the proposed Transit Village projects, cultural and arts activities and the kinds of assistance the Transit Village would be looking to receive from the State. Their comments are presented on pages 6 and 7 of this report. At the conclusion, the facilitator asked by a show of hands who wanted the Irvington Bus Station area, as shown on the plan, to be designated as a Transit Village. Everyone raised their hands and many clapped.



Irvington Transit Village Visioning Agenda

Saturday, October 18, 2014

9:00 am to 12:00 pm

Council Chambers

1 Civic Square

Irvington, New Jersey

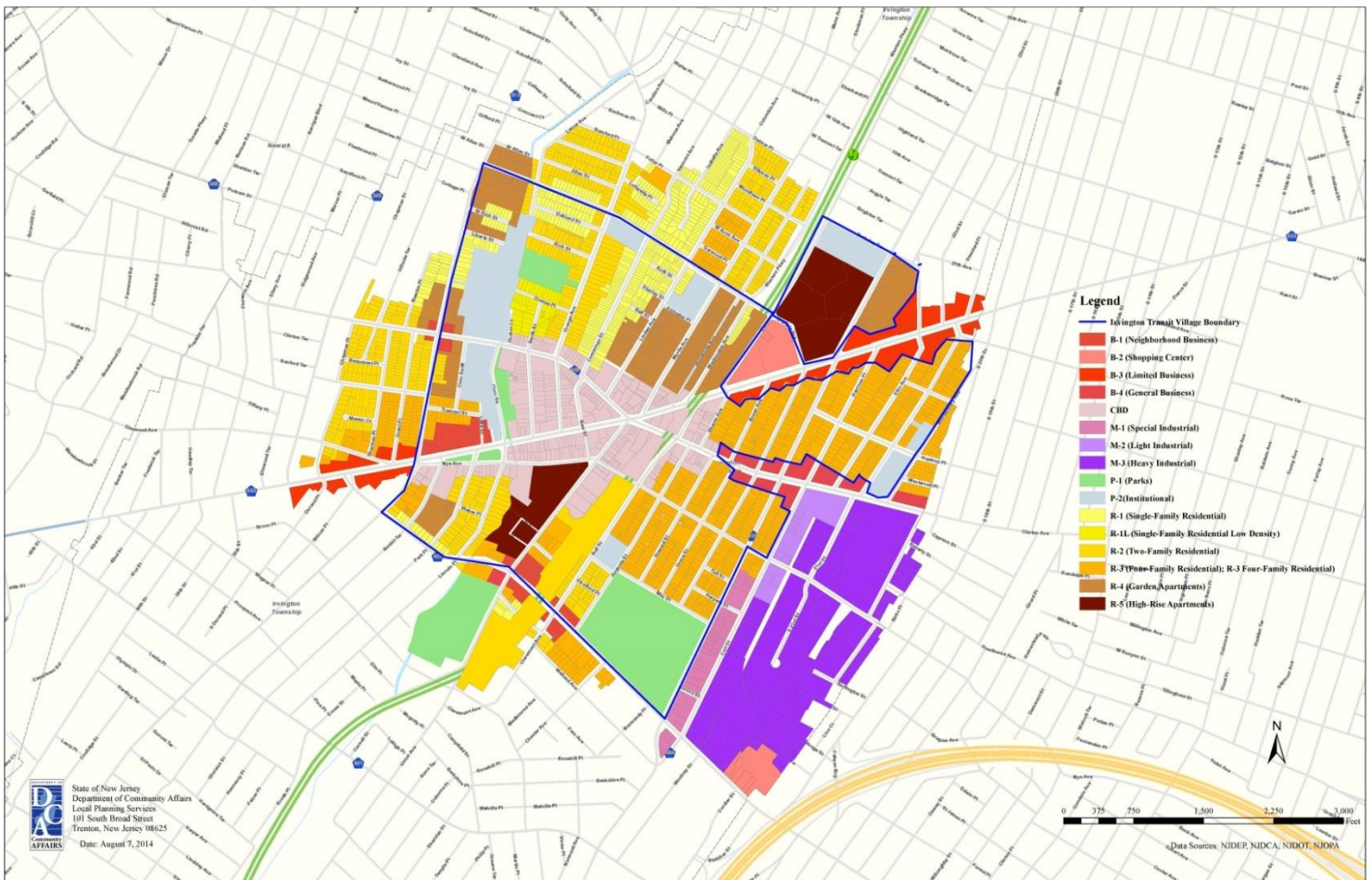
Presentation and visioning led by Bob Tessier and Ramond Joseph

- What is a Transit Village Designation?
- Why get a Transit Village Designation?
- History of Transit Village Applications
- Transit Village Proposed Boundaries
- Current Transit Village Zoning
 - Suggestions or concerns from participants on land use
- Current Transit Village Projects
 - Comments on current projects from participants
 - What other types of projects would participants like to see in the Transit Village?
- Transit Village Cultural and Arts Activities
 - What cultural activities should be expanded and supported?
 - What additional programs or venues would participants like to see developed in the Transit Village?
- What kinds of assistance should the Transit Village be looking for from the State?
 - Present list of assistance requests
 - Ask participants for any additions
 - Prioritize list with participants
- How many support pursuing the Transit Village Designation?
 - Show of hands

Proposed Transit Village Boundaries and Zoning

The facilitators went through the agenda and lead discussions on the opportunities and issues in the proposed Transit Village. The following project boundaries were reviewed with the public and are the same as those shown in Supplement II of the Transit Village Application.

Irvington Transit Village



Public Input

When asked what recommendations, concerns or areas of future development the public wanted to see in the Transit Village, they had the following responses:

- More living space on the upper floors of buildings on Springfield Avenue
- Ongoing funding from the State to make the community safe and clean
- Reuse the abandoned rail road line in town (outside proposed Transit Village)
- Encourage reinvestment in Chancellor Avenue
- Develop future trolley lines in the Transit Village
- Provide more bus stop shelters
- Attract high value uses, better stores and higher income residents
- Develop more park and rides
- Funding to improve active library in Transit Village, computer equipment needs major upgrades and job search functions need expanding
- The Veterans Center needs more attention and improvements outside and inside
- Transit Village needs a movie theater
- Downtown needs to develop a one stop shopping mix of stores to keep residents from leaving the downtown to shop in other communities
- The street scape improvements in the plan need to be expanded to other commercial streets and areas in the proposed Transit Village
- Safety improvements and better lighting is needed around existing bus shelters
- Bicycle lanes, bike racks and bike storage areas are needed
- Broadcast center, TV studio spaces are needed and should be encouraged in the Transit Village
- A commuter tax should be implemented to pay for community improvements
- Homeless population should have needs met and helped to get off the street and moved into better conditions
- Mayor stressed that the Transit Village should have a priority to be clean and safe. He stressed it was up to the residents and people at the meeting to not tolerate crime or trash and they had to all work together to make Irvington more attractive and a better place to live.

The following list of the types of assistance the Township is looking for from the State if they are designated as a Transit Village was updated from Supplement II to include the suggestions at the visioning session:

- Expansion and development of current cultural and ethnic festivals to add entertainment and art projects to all current festivals specifically the Unity Day Festival, the Haitian Flag Day, the Latino Heritage Festival and the National Night Out event;
- Safe streets to schools grant should be attained to tie the High School in the center of town into the commercial district just blocks away;
- Support in arts and entertainment funding for Irvington Manor helping is bring more vitality to the cultural life in the Transit Village;
- Façade and street scape improvements to the Irvington Manor;
- Support from HMFA and other affordable housing programs for the affordable housing components of the Hilltop Center;
- Transit support for the Valley Mall Plaza into surrounding areas with bus lines and stops;
- Addition of Bike Racks to the Irvington Bus Station;
- Pedestrian linkages of the Irvington Bus Station with safe crossing to both sides of Springfield Avenue;
- Transit and NJRA support for the repurposing and revitalization of brownfields and greyfields;
- Safe streets to schools improvements for pedestrian and bike linkages from the Irvington High School to the surrounding downtown district;
- Expansion of the County Engineering Departments Streetscape improvement project to the balance of Springfield Avenue and intersecting commercial streets;
- Technical and operational support for current Business Improvement Districts;
- Technical and financing assistance with Vacant, Abandoned and Tax Lien Lot Inventory in Transit Village;
- Assistance with park funding to provide additional equipment and program for recreational programs for the parks and programs in the Transit Village;
- Assistance from the School Development Authority with repurposing parcels owned by the authority at the edge of the Transit Village that are no longer going to be used as a school; and
- Any additional resources to keep the Transit Village clean and safe as well as to promote more revitalization and redevelopment.

The sign in sheets for the Visioning Session are as follows:



**ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND TRANSIT VILLAGE
FORUM ON A VISION FOR IRVINGTON'S FUTURE**

October 18, 2014

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**ECONOMIC STRATEGY AND TRANSIT VILLAGE
FORUM ON A VISION FOR IRVINGTON'S FUTURE**

October 18, 2014

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