

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

APPENDIX A: Granular Feedback Concerning Existing Conditions

Targeted Area Positives:

The desired community center of Hyde Park contains positive elements to build from, with substantial opportunities and redevelopment potential.

- A variety of *physical positives* were identified including historical structures, stone walls, sidewalks, traffic lights and curb cuts, and beautification-related improvements initiated by the town environmental visual committee.
- *Future opportunities* were highlighted with a focus on perceived hamlet's small group of property owners, significant traffic counts, a clean slate of open developable area with the potential future and fresh "look and feel" and pedestrian connections.
- The identified "*center of town*" is a convenient location to bring the community together with re-development and mixed-use opportunities that can bring residents, the regional population and tourists to a centralized mix of commercial, retail and residential uses.

Targeted Area Negatives:

A passionate Hyde Park community vocalized an angry displeasure at the deteriorated physical conditions of its community center with an energy, drive and commitment required to engage in the needed revitalization process.

- The clear opinion throughout the community focused on *the physical appearance of a depressed retail area vacant for years*, burdening the community with an anchor of despair and depression that tarnishes the entire corridor. This overriding backlash included adjacent retail and commercial areas better maintained, but still falling short of expectations and a vision of a once-vibrant Hyde Park.
- *Key development tools* were identified as essential for a corridor revitalization, including public wastewater, a structured and defined planning board approval process, design and signage standards, enhanced and flexible zoning, related density, a more defined community center, and a strong green feel, all providing a unique experience.
- Clearly expressed was a consuming feeling of a proud community lost. Embrace the historic past or run away from the distinguished pride of lost generations. A divided community surfaced with no clear vision for the future, disconnected geographically with

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

two diverse traffic corridors highlighting economic divides rather than embracing the unique differences and passions. *Those interviewed "screamed" for unity, common goals and areas of neutrality*, for a restored Hyde Park to love and defend for future generations to come. The demand to develop a vision and plan for the future was heard loud and clear.

What Would You Change?

A deep passion exists with the people of Hyde Park to embrace the challenges of change and tough decisions required to restore the once proud community and strong brand of Hyde Park.

- The Hyde Park community wants its pride back. Stakeholders envision a *redeveloped and restored heart of the community* featuring a mix of old and new, with classy design and signage, including dynamic landscaping and green space, making the statement that Hyde Park is back.
- The process of bringing the attractive, significant and powerful brand of Hyde Park back to prominence *won't be an easy task*. Hyde Park understands that the hard and challenging issues of poverty, uneven economic opportunities, unlivable housing stock, depressed hotel properties, lack of infrastructure, project approval challenges and a lack zoning flexibility must be addressed head on to plant the seeds of revitalization.

Development Opportunities:

Dynamic ideas, concepts, themes and overall vision for a new Hyde Park respectful of the past and embracing the future surfaced, and provide a dynamic blueprint for an exciting future.

- Real excitement and enthusiasm surfaced once the concept of a *true mixed development* was discussed for the center of the community: Housing incorporated in a collage of boutique retail, professional commercial space, including a public gathering place with a unique historical village atmosphere, all working to create a special experience.
- The concept of working with the historic properties, the CIA and regional developers to develop a strategy to *keep the significant visitors in Hyde Park for longer visits* in cooperation with local and special needs residents, students, and a growing number of NYC-based weekend residents can and will be transformational.

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Transforming Hyde Park into a unique mix of family entertainment, exciting connections to the local food and craft beverage movement while embracing the significant historical past is a strategic approach for the future and universal prosperity.

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

Where Does Community Shop Now?

Local consumers who are forced to spend valuable consumer dollars elsewhere would seize local retail shopping opportunities and enthusiastically support new local development.

The Hyde Park community spends the bulk of its hard-earned money either to the south in Poughkeepsie or to the west in Kingston, retaining very little economic value locally. As enhanced opportunities for food and beverage, entertainment and a more enjoyable experience are developed, the local economic impact will grow and prosper.

Vision for the Future with Leadership, Appearance and Design:

Excitement galore once the people of Hyde Park shift focus to opportunity, redevelopment concepts, places of classy design and overall quality “look and feel” as part of a revitalization and restoration strategy to re-establish the dynamic future of its historic community.

- Genuine glee and a sparkle in the eye appears once discussions shift from problems and negatives to *opportunity*. Across all segments of the Hyde Park community, a vision surfaces of a true mixed-use development with statement design, classy architectural features, a mix of cool spaces providing a special experience for all. This can and will be the future of Hyde Park.
- Building off new projects and the redevelopment of existing space, there is a clear commitment to *clean up the community and reverse years of decline*. The people support enhanced code enforcement, aggressive strategies to combat blight, enhanced housing opportunities, and innovative development concepts along with a unified community-based organization to provide strong advocacy and political support for change.
- The unique future of Hyde Park generates excitement through a commitment of quality and visual improvements. A commitment of the arts, soulful decision-making, charming and classy visuals, a positive outlook to the future touching all diverse members of the community. A master plan will be developed in collaboration with all opinions, then followed by implementation overcoming status-quo thinking and economic protectionism.

Most Significant Obstacles to Success:

Long standing, deeply rooted and community-based obstacles are real and challenging to overcome, but with dynamic leadership, a mobilized and passionate energy, these

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

challenges won't stand in the way of embracing a united vision created from an engaged, diverse populace and implemented with commitment of purpose.

- Obstacles are but challenges to overcome to achieve success. Many significant challenges were identified as potential obstacles to success. While many emotions were expressed as real issues were highlighted, at no time did the threat of failure dominate the discussion. *Success is within reach with a detailed plan*, a clear path to implementation and a distinct understanding of the obstacles and the strategic approach to overcome the threat to a positive future for Hyde Park.
- The real obstacles to creating a vibrant development atmosphere and engaged developer community are focused on infrastructure and density limitations, zoning restrictions, planning board approval challenges, costly approval requirements, governance and business community in-difference, building and zoning department approaches and disappointed past expectations. All can be overcome with a committed local government and engaged community. The people can rally and overcome past decisions and policies negatively impacting future growth and prosperity.
- The people of Hyde Park are in great need and are ready for the community to join in the emotional process to update their comprehensive plan. Providing their emotional vision for a revitalized and vibrant Hyde Park will create the blueprint to the future. This process, engagement of the diverse and loyal Hyde Park community, open and emotional discussion of important issues and visionary debate of real obstacles will set forth the movement to overcoming the established ways of approaching investment and development of the future Hyde Park.

Strategic Re-development Concepts/Approaches of Value:

The potential vision, tools for success and valued concepts to re-invigorate and establish a true Town center and destination in the heart of Hyde Park will be the driver to restore the vibrancy of the overall community.

A proud Hyde Park community highlighted many approaches for incorporation into the overall vision and fabric of re-development opportunities. The key elements embraced included highlighting the historic past, craft food and beverage, a visitor's center, architectural, design and signage standards, mixed-use housing, festival and event space, expansion of hotel choices and a community trolley.

Additional Comments/Suggestions:

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

The many opinions of concern, challenges, excitement and vision become the base of community pride, motivation and purpose to drive this diverse community towards the vibrant future all are eager to embrace.

- Community pride and love of Hyde Park generates ideas, concerns and passion from the diverse community. Overall, the message was one of urgency to combat the challenges head on, unite behind a common vision and attack its implementation for a vibrant future. The experienced decline is real and if un-challenged will continue to drag the once-thriving community down and perpetuate the slow death and race to the bottom.

Yes, there are real issues confronting the community assembled over decades of decline. But, the energy and commitment is alive to take on the social and economic challenges while providing the atmosphere for development and private investment. Hyde Park can not only recover, but thrive with the citizens fully engaged and supported by true leadership and vision.

Targeted Area Positives:

- Hyde Park Stone Walls
- Historic Buildings
- Some landlord pride/improvements to property
- Stability & long-term tenants on Westside
- Connection to the Plaza to the south
- Sidewalks
- Re-development by McDonalds looks attractive
- Worst property owned mostly by one development company
- Heart of Rt. 9 commercial corridor
- Captive audience
- Westside area popular
- Offers some services and retail
- Neighborhoods surround area/could be walkable/Population close
- Some restaurants in area/food venues
- Nothing
- Traffic count
- Public water
- Identified as center of town
- Has potential
- Convenient location

Targeted Area Negatives:

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Run-down appearance of Eastside
- Whole Eastside stinks
- Eyesore/crappy look/Center of town appearance bad
- Abandoned/Rundown/uncared for
- Land locked
- Lack of any real town center due to disconnected community
- Community/Commercial area runs from History
- Signage
- No creative economy/Arts
- Lack of wastewater infrastructure death knell for any planned development with scale
- No clear vision for re-development
- Parking lots in tough shape/Potholes/area too tight/expand capacity
- No defined four corners
- People don't walk in Rt. 9 area
- Pinewoods/Fuller are unsafe for pedestrians
- Overall concern for pedestrian safety
- No parking/wastewater infrastructure/storm water
- Local consumers don't shop enough locally
- Planning board obstacle to development
- Small hotels with Section 8 residents have strong presence in area/threat of crime
- Appalled by influx of Section 8 housing and conditions/hotels full
- Lack of quality restaurants
- Property owners not interested in improving buildings/not much useful life left
- Lack of food market/Shop & Save needs competition
- Lack of food market for walkable neighborhoods
- No clothing or shoe retail
- Deteriorating safety and overall conditions
- Lacks stability/consumed with vacancies
- Vacant lots and buildings send message of bad times for community

What Would You Change?

- Clear and concise signage standards
- Environmentally appealing trees and landscaping
- Improved access – area unsafe for pedestrians and cars
- Design and establishment of a true town center bridging gap of Rt. 9 and Rt. 9G
- Develop service or internal road network/get traffic off Rt. 9
- Drive development deeper into property
- Highlight stonewalls and historic relevance
- Eliminate driveways

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Address Section 8 housing issue
- Improve front of buildings with façade program
- Some nicer re-development
- Work to reduce crime
- Make a mixed-use development
- Make true center of community between Rt. 9 and Rt. 9G
- Make history the centerpiece of the re-deployment and area theme
- Manage corridor access with limited entry into shopping plazas
- Embrace quality development and discourage low-quality options like Mavis
- Address vacant feel
- Landscaping/Flowers and trees
- Amend zoning on Parker Avenue to allow homebased and low-impact business
- Embrace special needs population with housing/employment and business training strategy at center of the community/Integration model
- Establish Special Needs themed branding and designation/link community, regional and state partnerships

Development Opportunities:

- **Housing**
 - Mixed-use with small units for rental and purchase
 - Located in second and third floors of new development
 - Some concern for third floors due to building scale
 - Apartments needed in walkable area
 - Family friendly apartments & condos/larger scale
 - Some concern over income levels and ability to attract
 - Roof decks and gardens
 - Townhouses and condos/no apartments
 - Due to community income numbers/see no market
 - Mixed use development with housing can be very intriguing
 - Integration of local/regional Special Needs population
 -
- **Commercial/Retail**
 - Butcher/Meat shop
 - Nursery
 - Supermarket
 - Coffee shop
 - Small department store/home goods
 - Hotel and bed and breakfast style lodging options walkable to retail
 - Bookstore with connection to local library and FDR store
 - Classy bar/pub

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Upgraded restaurants/food choices
- Enhance overall streetscape and appearance
- Shoe store/Shoemaker-repairs
- Ice cream store
- Higher quality pizza options
- Small specialty shops with needed services/café style/cool approach
- Pedestrian access important
- Aquarium
- Establish façade improvement program in partnership with property owners and developers
- Half-moon access to River connected to center of the community
- Foodie – Farm to Table strategy
- High-end grocery store
- Localize products
- Hair/beauty products providing unique niche
- Return bottle business model/Special Needs business integration
- Retail collaboration with historic properties not-for-profit partners to expand location and product opportunities
- Student driven
- Christmas/season driven
- Woman's focused boutique
- Some level of grocery/basics

- **Tourism Related**
 - Small boutique style retail options
 - Quality hotel
 - Taste NY connection/marketing value and food focus
 - Engaged Chamber of Commerce
 - Enhanced connection to historical resources
 - Family fun/kids' recreation and activities
 - Kid themed historical connections and activities
 - Strengthened internet resources and information to support trip planning
 - Open space
 - Tourism Office with person to greet travelers
 - Centralize historic places/homes tours
 - Improved internal transportation/Trolley
 - Partnership with historic properties on transportation collaboration
 - Sidewalk/Side streets themed cafes
 - Tourist bus access and parking
 - CIA connected restaurant or food themed venue with student involvement
 - Expanded farmers market connected to community center large enough to accommodate trucks and large crowds with parking

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Parking on Rt. 9
- Park-like setting
- Marketing collaboration with historic properties Not-for-Profit partners to ensure 2-3 day visits with improved lodging and food opportunities
- Historical/Cool
- Food and beer/Central to marketing
- Library collaboration with historic properties and Hyde Park facility with possible re-location to town center with modern scope and facilities
- CIA partnership with food and beverage concept not delivered on campus which connects demonstration and education activities with media coordination and historical themes.
- Need fresh events and themed programing/current stuff old and tired
- **Community Amenities Improvements**
 - Music venue with seasonal music and teenager entertainment
 - Benches underutilized due to safety, traffic on Rt. 9
 - Park/open space with water feature
 - Public gathering place unifying the community
 - Attractive appearance with dynamic landscaping
 - Area needs to be more inviting
 - Public art venue/connection to college art programs
 - Space for the expanded farmers market
 - Athletic venue/complex
 - Trolley connection to all venues for ease of moving to all venues/park once
 - Lights/community appearance/signage – unique and welcoming festive look by season
 - Create the destination for weekends
 - All weather event venue
 - Need a historic re-creation as center point such as Beekman Arms
 - Demo kitchen/media appropriate/CIA themed programing with historic theme
 - Former used car lot next to Town Hall must be addressed and could be festival area and quality community gateway

Where Does Community Shop Now?

- Determined by home location in Town
- South heads to Poughkeepsie/Fishkill/Galleria Mall & Westchester
- North heads to Kingston
- Rhinebeck also for restaurant variety
- Local for jewelry
- Internet

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

Vision for the Future with Leadership, Appearance and Design:

- Enhanced turning lanes and improved access
- Creation of new community based organization to implement vision
- Engage financially successful members of community for enhanced support
- Cohesive in look/uses/connections
- Knock down old buildings and re-design entire area to address traffic, speed and safety, access, pedestrian flow, and scale for community center
- Pick historical era such as 1880 and re-create in re-development scope
- Maybe mix multiply eras for diversity of historical significance and look
- Incorporate historical color/signage/facades/street treatment connected to old Hyde Park
- Centralized community center with access from both Rt. 9 and Rt. 9G connecting trails to larger open/greenspace and venue/Mini Central Park theme
- Raze buildings
- Aggressive approach needed
- Rt. 9 and Rt. 9G connector roads not safe
- Mixed use with four-corner grid intersection of scale to improve safety and access
- Strong presence of the arts/theatre
- Brick side streets/alley type deeper into the property to feel like Town Center
- End product to take pride in/sustainable with long term success connected to historic properties in partnership
- Gazebo/Concerts/Crosswalks connecting sides
- Full new master plan with better access zoned deeper into property
- Village atmosphere
- Vision and partnership with CIA can be accomplished with win/win vision and concept

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

Most Significant Obstacles to Success:

- Lack of wastewater infrastructure
- Zoning needs to be updated with larger commercial area behind current boundaries
- Taxes
- Property owners
- Bottleneck of transportation access
- Car Access
- Chamber of Commerce dis-connect and status quo protection
- Lack of support and encouragement from Town Hall and Planning Board
- Worst place to get things done, lack of support for development
- Lack of support for Bellfield or related project to help with tax base and important connection to community center
- Change is hard/community sometimes not receptive
- Select and minority negative thinking and opposition
- Previous plans built expectations and failed
- Planning board process is unpredictable/undefined/expensive/driven by member opinions rather than community agenda and plan
- All major Dutchess County developers have left Hyde Park
- Zoning limits vision and project scope
- Community skepticism/nothing gets done
- Pro-business vs. "status quo" and keep it the same
- Need a success to build momentum
- Planning board process undefined/real preliminary meeting process required/real process with required timeframe
- Chamber leadership a key blockage to change

Strategic Re-development Concepts/Approaches of Value:

- Improved pedestrian connections
- Visitor Center
- Trolley
- Bike access
- Architectural/Design standards
- Enhanced and expanded farmers market
- Wine themed business
- Select Chain fast food
- Enhanced housing options
- Festival/Event space
- Broadband hot spot

Town of Hyde Park
Retrofitting Hyde Park's Town Center
NYSERDA Cleaner, Greener Communities (CGC) Program Phase II, Category 2
CGC41658/Contract # 60265

Final Existing Conditions Summary Report

- Informative Kiosks
- Neighborhood/Village design
- Recreation/Bike racks
- Link to river/community connection
- Hyde Park app
- Craft Beverage Mall & Focus
- Food Mall
- History Centerpiece of vision
- Food themed incubator/accelerator with media value

Additional Comments/Suggestions:

- Chamber of Commerce lack of activity and events a community problem
- Total Chamber of Commerce disconnect to tourism and historic properties/sites
- Don't abandon goal of Hyde Park Train station activity even if weekends or seasonal
- Improved river access and overall community connection
- Norrie Point with deep water access and historical connection to day liner traffic
- Section 8 housing and attraction of homeless population/Crime up
- Sidewalks needed into residential neighborhoods
- Ingress and egress improvements critically needed
- Area attracting NYC population despite lack of vibe
- Need centralized coordination of community events calendar with related publicity
- Community splintered/disconnected
- Hyde Park has community pride/assets/people care – need aggressive pulling teeth effort and energy
- Lots of plans have started, but never finished. Finish a plan and strategy.
- Need overall beatification effort and plan
- Extremely frustrated by Chamber of Commerce/lack of programs/no support
- Two major highways, Rt. 9 and Rt. 9G run parallel, but two different cultures. Must connect.
- New collaborative library space would feature use of technology, be community based, with focus on current needs and functionality
- Explore special needs population partnership and integration
- Continue dialogue with CIA for right project, innovative concept and collaboration