

Hicksville visioning moves forward



Last Thursday evening, March 4th, Vision hosted the second public meeting for the Downtown Hicksville Revitalization at the Hicksville Community Center. Over 150 residents, business owners, civic leaders and agency representatives showed up to impact the future of their neighborhood. After opening remarks from the Hicksville Community Council, the presentations got underway. Vision's Eric Alexander and Elissa Ward led much of the meeting, along with members of the study team. A theme of the meeting was a worry over excessive bureaucracy on the way to implementation. The study team reminded the crowd that we need to take the ideas from these meetings directly to the leaders, as we have begun doing already.



The Vision design team was led by AECOM, with assistance PS&S, Anderson|Kim Architects, StreetsPlan Collaborative, ADL III Architecture and Steve Meehan Landscape Architecture. The number one goal for Hicksville, based off of the results from the first community meeting held in January, is improving walkability. The study team also focused their work on ways to capture some of the 56,000 cars a day that come through Hicksville via Routes 106/107. They broke down the revitalization work into three phases.



In the short term, there could be a farmer's market (a very popular idea), a food cart, arts improvements along major roads and some streetscape improvements. Some of these things could happen as soon as this summer. The second phase would include private investments to boost a cultural arts district, nightlife, more restaurants, open space, infill development and senior housing. The long term goals would be a large, private investment in the area, including a possible hotel. Other presentations mentioned a new park on the "triangle" town center area, code revisions that would do things like building closer to the street front (Hicksville's current zoning codes allow for some great flexibility already), improving on-street and structured parking and making use of various grants and funding sources that are available.

During the Q & A, residents showed a united front of supporting revitalization through infill and beautification efforts. Suggestions included decreasing the speed limit now, improving lighting in the downtown, considering security and surveillance in the park, including green building design, lowering any burden on existing business owners, fixing the parking near the train station, alleviating commercial truck traffic on 106/107 and strengthening relationships between civics and businesses.

At the end of the meeting, nearly everyone in attendance raised their hand in response to the question "do you support this vision for revitalization?" Stay tuned for more news from this energized community!