

Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Initiative

Public Workshop #2 Meeting Summary

September 14, 2023 | 5:00PM – 7:00 PM, Clarion Hotel, Bayside Ballroom

Introduction

The Dunkirk Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Public Workshop #2 was held on Thursday, September 14, 2023, from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM at the Clarion Hotel Conference Center located at 30 Lake Shore Drive East, Dunkirk, NY. The purpose of the workshop was to solicit input on proposed projects.

The workshop was held in an open house format with information about each of the 24 proposed projects and the overall DRI process displayed on easel-mounted boards throughout the room. Attendees were provided public feedback forms to solicit the following feedback for each proposed project:

1. Does the project align with the DRI vision, goals, and strategies?
 - Yes or No
2. Will the project transform Downtown Dunkirk?
 - Yes or No
3. What is your level of support for the project?
 - Low, Medium, or High
4. Additional comments about the project:
 - Open-ended responses

Workshop materials were provided in both English and Spanish. During the workshop, members of the consultant team, Department of State, and Local Planning Committee circulated among the project information boards, engaged with attendees, discussing needs and opportunities. Throughout the two-hour workshop, 47 members of the public attended, and 22 public feedback forms were collected.

For members of the public who were not able to attend the workshop, an online version of the public feedback form was posted to the Dunkirk DRI website. To maximize the opportunity for input, the online public feedback form was opened August 22 (several weeks in advance of the workshop) and closed September 19. The online public feedback form was available in English and Spanish, and was promoted through local news media, social media, Local Planning Committee (LPC) Meeting #4 on August 22, LPC member networks, and the Back to School Bash on August 28. There were 136 responses to the online public feedback form.

In addition to Public Workshop #2 and the online feedback form, the Dunkirk High School senior class was engaged on September 14 with a presentation of the DRI program and 24 proposed projects. After the presentation, the students were provided the opportunity to provide feedback on the proposed projects using the online feedback form. Feedback forms were collected from 83 students and consolidated with the responses collected at Public Workshop #2 and the online feedback form.

In total (between Public Workshop #2, the online feedback form, and engagement with Dunkirk High School students), 241 public feedback forms were collected.

Data Summary

Projects were evaluated based on the percentage of affirmative responses to the first two questions and responses to level of support. Projects were grouped into terciles based on their score for each question as “Low” (bottom 8 projects), “Moderate” (middle 8 projects), or “High” (top 8 projects). The results are summarized below in **Table 1** - Alignment with DRI Vision and Goals, **Table 2** - Transformational Potential, **Table 3** - Level of Support, and **Table 4** - Overall Evaluation. Table 4 combines the responses to all three questions to evaluate feedback overall. Qualitative feedback from the “Additional Comments” question is summarized at the end of this section. Information on each project can be found on the project website at www.DunkirkDRI.com.

Table 1. Alignment with DRI Vision and Goals

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate Stearns Court Public Space Improve Memorial Park Revitalize the Coburn Block Renovate the Clarion Hotel Create RAD Conversion Redevelop Demetri’s on the Lake Create Indoor Waterpark Small Projects Fund 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Dunkirk Marina West Side Redevelop Ehlers Building Create Golf Simulator Sports Bar Create Life Skills Youth Center Construct Residential and Mixed-Use Development Renovate 200-202 Central Ave Redevelop the Dunkirk Macaroni Building Restore the Historic Public Library 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Construct Central Ave Mixed-Use Development Create Workforce Development Training Center Fit Out and Equip New Wet Labs Redevelop 314 Central Ave Renovate Mixed-Use Building on Central Ave Improve the Dunkirk Marina East Side Redevelop Bank Building Create ADAMS Event and Community Center

Table 2: Transformational Potential

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate Stearns Court Public Space Revitalize the Coburn Block Fit Out and Equip New Wet Labs Redevelop Ehlers Building Renovate Mixed-Use Building on Central Ave Create RAD Conversion Renovate the Clarion Hotel Improve Memorial Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Dunkirk Marina West Side Create ADAMS Event and Community Center Create Life Skills Youth Center Redevelop Demetri's on the Lake Small Projects Fund Redevelop the Dunkirk Macaroni Building Redevelop Bank Building Create Indoor Water Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the Dunkirk Marina East Side Renovate 200-202 Central Ave Restore the Historic Public Library Redevelop 314 Central Ave Construct Residential and Mixed-Use Development Create Golf Simulator Sports Bar Create Workforce Development Training Center Construct Central Ave Mixed-Use Development

Table 3: Level of Support

Low	Moderate	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate Stearns Court Public Space Revitalize the Coburn Block Fit Out and Equip New Wet Labs Redevelop Ehlers Building Renovate Mixed-Use Building on Central Ave Create RAD Conversion Renovate the Clarion Hotel Improve Memorial Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve Dunkirk Marina West Side Create ADAMS Event and Community Center Create Life Skills Youth Center Redevelop Demetri's on the Lake Small Projects Fund Redevelop the Dunkirk Macaroni Building Redevelop Bank Building Create Indoor Water Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve the Dunkirk Marina East Side Renovate 200-202 Central Ave Restore the Historic Public Library Redevelop 314 Central Ave Construct Residential and Mixed-Use Development Create Golf Simulator Sports Bar Create Workforce Development Training Center Construct Central Ave Mixed-Use Development

Table 4: Overall Evaluation

Low	Medium	High
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehabilitate Stearns Court Public Space Renovate Mixed-Use Building on Central Ave Revitalize the Coburn Block Redevelop the Dunkirk Macaroni Building Renovate the Clarion Hotel Create RAD Conversion Redevelop Ehlers Building Redevelop Bank Building 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Redevelop Demetri's on the Lake Improve Memorial Park Create Life Skills Youth Center Create Indoor Water Park Small Projects Fund Create ADAMS Event and Community Center Improve the Dunkirk Marina East Side Improve Dunkirk Marina West Side 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fit Out and Equip New Wet Labs Redevelop 314 Central Ave Restore the Historic Public Library Construct Central Ave Mixed-Use Development Renovate 200-202 Central Ave Construct Residential and Mixed-Use Development Create Golf Simulator Sports Bar Create Workforce Development Training Center

Themes from Additional Comments

- Projects proposing restored or new buildings should not include apartments and should focus more on attracting business, such as retail.
- There is not enough parking for projects that propose an expansion of existing use (restaurants, community centers).
- Funding other than DRI may be more appropriate for educational or affordable housing projects.
- Project sponsors with greater capacity should have lower funding requests.
- Historic buildings that still provide services should be invested in.

- The downtown area needs more sit-down restaurants.
- Some proposed projects along the waterfront are already satisfactory. Resources should be allocated elsewhere in the downtown area.
- New housing should be market-rate and not affordable or low-income housing.

NOTE: Public feedback is just one of the evaluation tools the Dunkirk DRI Local Planning Committee will consider when evaluating projects. When selecting projects to recommend for NY Forward funding, the LPC will also consider the State's overarching NY Forward program goals; the Western New York Regional Economic Development Council's strategies; the Dunkirk DRI vision, goals, and strategies; State and local evaluation criteria; market conditions and economic trends; and community issues and opportunities.