



Watertown City Council
Tuesday, October 12, 2021
7:00 p.m.

WORK SESSION AGENDA

The City Council meeting is open to the public. All unvaccinated attendees must wear a mask.

Discussion Items:

1. Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Streetscape Project Update
 - Keith F. Ewald, AICP, PLA, Managing Landscape Architect, Barton & Loguidice
 - Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community Development Director
2. Traffic Signal at Arcade and Arsenal Streets
 - Michael Delaney, City Engineer
3. CitiBus Project Updates
 - Patrick W. Keenan, Superintendent of Public Works
4. Sale of Tax Foreclosed Houses
 - Kenneth A. Mix, City Manager

October 7, 2021

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council

From: Michael A. Lumbis, Planning and Community Development Director

Subject: Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) Streetscape Project

As part of the \$10 million Downtown Revitalization Initiative (DRI) award from New York State, the City of Watertown received \$1,500,000 for a Downtown Streetscape Project and \$100,000 for enhancements to the Governor Roswell P. Flower Monument. On March 15, 2021, following a competitive Request for Proposal (RFP) and interview process, the City Council adopted a resolution retaining Barton & Loguidice to provide planning and design services for the project.

Over the last seven months, Barton & Loguidice has been working with Planning and Engineering Staff on proposed designs for the project's five focus areas: Court Street, Lachenauer Plaza, the 200 blocks of Coffeen and Franklin Streets and the intersection of Washington and Stone Streets surrounding the Roswell P. Flower Monument.

In July, Barton & Loguidice, in conjunction with Planning Staff, held a series of focus groups to solicit input from key stakeholders, such as property owners and business owners in each of the focus areas, then held an open house in September to engage the general public. For eight days following the open house, an online survey was available for citizens to provide feedback on the proposed designs.

At the October 12, 2021 City Council Work Session, Keith Ewald, AICP, RLA, of Barton & Loguidice will provide an overview of the project, explain the proposed designs, and summarize all the feedback received during all the various outreach efforts. City Council will then have the opportunity to offer its own thoughts, questions and preferences on the project.

Following the Work Session, Barton & Loguidice will begin final design work. The project timeline calls for finishing design work and putting the construction work out to bid by mid-winter and awarding a construction contract in late winter so that construction can commence in the spring. Planning and Engineering Staff anticipate completing all physical work in one construction season with a Fall 2022 completion date.

October 7, 2021

To: The Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Kenneth A. Mix, City Manager
Subject: Sale of Tax Foreclosed Houses

Staff is preparing for a tax sale auction. I am suggesting that we sell the houses that we have through a Request for Proposal (RFP) process, instead of auctioning them.

The concern with the usual method is that often minimal improvements are made after the sale and the properties continue to have a negative effect on the neighborhood. There is also a high probability that they will be rental units, rather than owner occupied.

Under the RFP process there would be a rating system developed that will take into consideration the buyer's rehab experience, the amount proposed to be invested, the proposed tenancy (rental or owner-occupied), and the proposed purchase price. Staff would rank the proposals and present the highest ranked one to the City Council for approval of the sale.

We are also investigating the use of Auctions International for selling vacant parcels (and houses if the City Council decides to stay with auctioning them.)