

York Village Study Committee:
Progress Report #5
20 June 2014

Introduction

This report is intended to update the Board of Selectmen on progress made since the VSC filed its 26 March 2014 report. The last few months have been focused largely on executing the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) process described in our last report. Identifying a firm to assist the VSC in its design work helps move us beyond planning and into project development. A detailed description of the project development process as it applies to York Village is included in *Appendix A*.

Our Process: the RFQ

The RFQ is a popular method for soliciting and selecting firms to provide professional services. It is distinct from traditional bidding processes where the selection of a firm is based primarily on price. It is also distinct from the Request for Proposals (RFP) process in which price can come to overwhelm other considerations. Price is important to us, but we feel that the qualifications of possible firms had to be sorted out before we are ready to talk about proposal development. The track records of firms that might apply to do this work are paramount to us. We do not want to solicit proposals from multiple firms because we want to be able to choose the best firm based first and foremost on their qualifications.

We believe that the RFQ process is the best way to identify the firm most qualified to undertake the complex work envisioned by the committee. The execution of the committee's visioning work will require multiple disciplines working as a team. These disciplines include architecture and landscape architecture, urban design and planning, civil and traffic engineering, economic development and financing, and possibly others as well.

The RFQ published on the Town website and made available to the BOS in March was explicit about what the winning team would have to consider:

complete street design, signage (regulatory, directional, and informational), pavement markings and traffic control; bicycle and pedestrian enhancements; hardscape and landscape design; public parking; public space creation and design; possible underground and above ground utility relocations; drainage modifications and improvements including implementation of green infrastructure; public participation and acceptance.

The document also clearly stated that the successful firm might be required to:

create preliminary design reports; perform field surveys; plot topography and cross sections; prepare submissions for utility verification and relocation engineering; develop right-of-way plans; prepare drainage reports; perform geotechnical investigations and prepare geotechnical reports; prepare type, size and location reports; prepare structure drawings (including culverts, catch basins and monument support) for repair, rehabilitation or replacement; prepare erosion control details and narrative; prepare applications for environmental and other federal, state and municipal permits; perform traffic

counts and analyses, including detour planning and mapping; prepare traffic control plans and narrative; investigate utility and property involvements and coordinate with utilities; prepare submissions for meetings; attend meetings with the Village Study Committee, Town boards or other agencies; and prepare construction plans and documents, specifications and estimates.

Given the complexity of the work, the VSC was pleased that six well known multi-disciplinary firms responded to the RFQ. An evaluation form was prepared for the committee's use to help compare these firms. A copy of this form is included in the Appendices to this report (*See Appendix B*). This tool gave the committee a way to compare each of the lengthy responses received. Each firm's cover letter, understanding of the work to be done, experience with similar projects, the quality of their staff, their reliance on subcontractors, the location of their office and project manager, their quality of references and any record of professional misconducts was asked for and assessed. Two firms were eliminated from consideration following that assessment.

The four remaining firms were then invited to meet with the VSC in 60 to 75 minute interviews. The firms were asked to make presentations introducing us to: their team, their process, their experiences, their firm's philosophy, their capacity regarding public involvement, any particular challenges that their team identified, and their ideas about financing the project (beyond municipal funds). These points as well as overall assessments were identified in a second evaluation form developed by the VSC. A copy of this form is included in the Appendices to this report (*See Appendix C*). This process led us to see that one firm was superior. The conclusion of this report contains the VSC's recommendation for Board action.

Anticipated Scope of Services

It was clearly stated in the RFQ that the selected consultant team would be expected to build on the progress made over the last three years. The VSC will continue to play a leadership role in seeing this project to completion and will be involved in all aspects of community engagement. The consultant team is expected to work in partnership with the VSC toward those ends.

With that said, the project has now reached a stage requiring technical assistance from a planning, urban design, and engineering team that is beyond the expertise of the Village Study Committee. The specific work products expected from the consultants were identified in the RFQ:

- An Initial Feasibility Assessment of the three intersection designs in regard to turning radii, traffic flow and safety.
- A Conceptual plan of proposed improvements suitable for presentation at public meetings.
- This Conceptual Plan should include: landscape treatments such as street trees, sidewalks, location of lighting fixtures, overhead utility relocation possibilities, (with underground utility placement fully explored), bike markings, any other proposed public spaces, etc.

- It should include not only the central intersection, but also the area of York Street and Long Sands Road that are encompassed by the 2-5 minute village radii. Final limits of improvements will have to be determined, but will not exceed the limits of the areas defined by these radii.
- An assessment of on-street parking spaces and off-street publicly accessible spaces, including any loss of existing parking resulting from the proposed design, and the total maximum number of parking spaces available at conclusion of the project.
- Preliminary design plans and anticipation of construction costs.
- Final Design Plans for construction.
- Attendance at some regular Village Study Committee Meetings.
- Attendance at multiple Public Meetings

This is the general charge we would like to confirm and flesh out with the selected firm. We do not know exactly what costs the firm may propose for this work. Cost will depend on several factors, including the number of public meetings deemed necessary and the hourly rate of those team members attending the meetings. The only way we can determine the cost at this point is to sit down with the principals and hammer out these issues.

Our Recommendation

The firm rated above all others is The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative (TDRC) of Portland. TDRC impressed the committee in several ways. Before their presentation even began, the five members of the team who came to the interview had created a positive energy which lasted to the very end of the meeting. They were confident, outgoing, collegial and well informed. By their ability to build rapport and create a partnership with the committee, they modeled how they would likely act in community meetings. TDRC brings a wide range of disciplines and a well integrated team; the whole package from landscape architecture to geo-engineering. The committee was impressed by the commitment of their principal and proposed project manager, Denis Lachman. It is important to the VSC that they also have completed similar projects in Rockland, Camden, Thomaston, Waldoboro and Portland.

TDRC was the only firm to have an Economist, Rodney Lynch, on their team. The role he will play in helping to secure funding for the project was very encouraging. "Municipal funding should be your last resort," he said during the interview. The team's presentation was impressive in technological terms and their PowerPoint presentation was dynamic, dramatic and imaginative. Their emphasis on the centrality of public meetings with varied stakeholder groups impressed the committee, too. They were clearly familiar with the committee's history and work to date. They'd studied our three scenarios and were well acquainted with the challenges we and they will face in implementing any sort of changes on the ground. They were understanding of historic preservation issues and had a grasp of the way the village has changed over the centuries. TDRC is our first (and only) choice.

Our Request

The Village Study committee requests authorization from the Board of Selectmen to negotiate a fee with The Downtown Revitalization Collaborative to design and develop the York Village Master Plan. The VSC would then return to the Board of Selectmen with a recommended design fee and possible funding sources.

After negotiating the detailed scope of services in light of the project development process (see *Appendix A*), the cost schedule and the timetable for completion of the design phase, the VSC will return to the BOS with a request to offer a contract to the firm under specific and detailed negotiated terms. In the event that we are unable to reach a satisfactory agreement with TDRC, the VSC will return to the BOS to discuss how best to go forward. Ideally, the next appearance before the Board to present this proposal will occur as early as July 7, 2014.

Conclusion

As noted in the March report, no commitment of funds has been proposed at this point (beyond website development, the engineering base study being conducted by LinePro and other minor expenses). No further commitments will be made without the explicit consent of the Board of Selectmen.

Appendices

Appendix A. Proposed Project Development Process — York Village Master Plan

Appendix B. RFQ Evaluation Sheet #1 — Used to eliminate the less qualified firms

Appendix C. RFQ Evaluation Sheet #2 — Used to identify the most qualified firm

The Village Study Committee:

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*Appendix A. Proposed Project Development Process —
York Village Master Plan*

Appendix B. RFQ Evaluation Sheet #1

	<i>Max Score</i>	<i>Carr Lynch</i>	<i>Fay Spofford</i>	<i>(TDRC)</i>	<i>Mitchell</i>	<i>Oak Point</i>	<i>Sebago</i>
Cover Letter. Does the letter suggest that the consultant knows the Town of York? Is it coherent and professional?	10						
Understanding of the Work to be Done. Did the consultant demonstrate understanding of the services required according to the Scope of Work?	20						
Experience with Similar Projects. Did the consultant demonstrate that they have successfully performed similar types of municipal work in the past 10 years?	20						
Quality of the Staff. Did the consultant demonstrate that they have a quality staff that can provide the services required in the Scope of Work?	20						
Use of Sub-consultants. Maximum points should be awarded to consultants who use two or fewer sub-consultants and to those whose consultants have been successful on similar municipal projects.	10						
Location of Office and Manager. Maximum points should be awarded to Consultants whose office location suggests that they will be accessible and readily available for meetings held in town?	10						
Quality of References. Are the references detailed and convincing? Do they come from places similar to York and undertaking work similar to the Scope of Work?	10						
Misconduct Points. Maximum negative points should be given to Consultants who have citations or notices of violations to their local office and proposed employees?	-25						
Total (Maximum = 100)							

Appendix C RFQ Evaluation Sheet #2

	<i>Max Score</i>	<i>Fay Spofford</i>	<i>Mitchell</i>	<i>TDRC</i>	<i>Carr Lynch</i>
Introduction. Are you happy with who is on the team as well as the roles each would play?	10				
Their Process. Do you understand the process they will use in executing the work?	10				
Experiences. Are you satisfied that the team has worked successfully together on similar projects?	10				
Their Philosophy. Is the firm in sync with the VSC when it comes to project scope and historic circumstance?	10				
Public Involvement. Are you satisfied that they can handle the extent of public involvement and communication this project requires?	10				
Challenges. Are they prepared for conducting and implementing the project?	10				
Financing. Are they capable of helping the VSC to secure outside financing for the project?	10				
Overall. Evaluate your general impression of the firm and your enthusiasm about working with them?	10				
TOTAL	80				