



Batavia Opportunity Area

Draft Stakeholder Interview Summaries

In the winter of 2012 and 2013 stakeholders were interviewed by the consultant team to understand their thoughts and opinions on:

- Assets in the area;
- Impediments to redevelopment;
- Opportunities/Vision for future redevelopment in the area;
- Potential projects in the area; and
- Needed amenities, improvements to infrastructure or zoning regulations.

Stakeholders included an assortment of individuals and organizations representing businesses, property owners and public agencies that play a role in redevelopment within the Batavia Opportunity Area (BOA). Stakeholders met with the consultant team in the winter of 2012 and 2013 for informal dialogue sessions. The discussions provided an opportunity for the consultant team to introduce the BOA project objectives to participants and for the stakeholders to provide information based on a series of questions asked by the consultant team.

The primary purposes of the interviews were to incorporate the stakeholders' input into the development of a community vision for the BOA (along with public and steering committee input) and to start developing partnerships to advance redevelopment in the BOA. This was done early in the BOA project to insure that the BOA project was informed by the stakeholder input and that stakeholder partners' projects were supported by BOA recommendations.

Stakeholder comments were divided into six categories:

- Current assets in the BOA;
- Impediments to redevelopment in the BOA;
- Future opportunities in the BOA;
- What areas should receive the highest priority;
- Uses that stakeholders would like to see more or less of; and
- Communities that have characteristics to emulate in the BOA.

As the stakeholder dialogues were informal some interview questions were not answered by some stakeholders. In addition, as noted by bold and underline text in the summaries below, some common themes were provided by multiple stakeholders. Confidential or proprietary information provided by stakeholders is not included in this summary.

Comments in **Bold** were provided by at least two stakeholders

Comments in **Bold** and **Underline** were provided by most stakeholders

CURRENT ASSETS IN THE BOA/BATAVIA

- **Schools, people, small town**
- Wellness complex downtown – hospital, YMCA, Senior Center
- **Transportation network/central location – all roads lead to Batavia**
- **Incentives available – City and County**
- **Infrastructure**
- Regional job growth – 236 jobs at yogurt plants
- Main Street revitalization/downtown design guidelines
- GCC
- Hospital
- St. Jerome complex
- Restaurants
- Gyms
- GOArt!
- Holland Land Office (outside BOA but connections needed)

IMPEDIMENTS TO REDEVELOPMENT IN THE BOA/BATAVIA

- Public Perception – Harvester, State Street, Swan Street, Austin Park – buildings, housing, safety
- Implementation/follow through of plans with boards
- Layout of City Centre
- City Centre ownership
- **Sidewalks/Roads/Parking in need of repairs**
- **Parking supply downtown in certain sections**
- Traffic flow downtown
- **Demographics – lower income group growing; middle class shrinking; aging community; increasing public sector share of jobs**
- **Need for coordination/minimizing duplication among economic development entities**
- **Banks/Lending Opportunities**
- National Grid system in southeast section of downtown
- **School taxes**
- **Interpretation, communication and consistency of City Codes by Code Office – too stringent/lack of flexibility**
- Lack of *high speed* broadband (medical, business uses) and Wifi
- Lack of existing “ready” retail/office/industrial (no need for major improvements)
- Neighborhoods, esp. Harvester Area
- Downtown involvement/leadership
- Bank Street traffic impacting pedestrian/downtown experience (crossing street, noise, speed)

FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES IN THE BOA

- **Harvester - mix of business/light manufacturing**
- Della Penna – specialty stores, art, history
- **Creek Area – pedestrian access, create destination, performance area**
- **Walking trails/bike trails**
- State Street – neighborhood revitalization; need for leader/group
- Rail – access/distribution
- **Medical/Wellness complex**
- **Batavia should take advantage of county seat/central location; regional location**
- **Employment (250) and potential spin off of support industries for yogurt plants**
- **Housing**
 - Mid to upscale detached
 - New or adaptive reuse (lofts)
 - Townhouses (empty nesters)
- Shovel Ready “light” – getting projects read via BOA for development
 - Permitting
 - Cleanup
 - Infrastructure
 - Generic Environmental Impact Statement to advance redevelopment
- **Another Ice Rink** (outdoor rink downtown mentioned also)
- STAMP future jobs/spin off – 10,000 direct; 20,000 to 40,000 spin off
- Green energy opportunities (solar, hydro)/Green infrastructure opportunities (parks, trails)
- Main Street Retail Incubator
- **Educational institutions** (incl. Osteopathic College/Residency at Hospital – 12 students in three year residency program)
- **Conference Center**
- Bakery
- Ladies Apparel/shoes
- Agribusiness
- City involvement to advance redevelopment/take the lead (property acquisition/assembly)
- **Higher end hotel**
- **Bike racks**
- City and Downtown Branding
- Expanding GOArt! mission outside of “building” – restaurant, outdoor displays, involvement with neighbors

WHAT AREA(S) SHOULD RECEIVE THE HIGHEST PRIORITY?

- **Harvester** including Food Incubator
- **Della Penna** – prepare for shovel ready status
- **City Centre**
- Neighborhoods around BOA
- YMCA, Save-a-lot Bldg.
- Waterfront/Creek

ANY USES YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE OF; LESS OF IN BOA**MORE OF:**

- **Eating/Restaurants**
 - Lunch - quick and affordable
 - Upscale/small restaurant
- Choice of Retail/Cluster of Retail
- Corporate Housing
- **Walking trail/bike trails**
- **Movie theaters**
- Wegmans
- **Cultural**
- One major retail anchor downtown
- Medical offices
- Family activities

LESS OF:

- General Offices (overbuilt)
- Restaurants (too many)

**USING ANOTHER COMMUNITY AS AN EXAMPLE, HOW WOULD YOU ENVISION BATAVIA IN 20 YEARS?
WHY?**

- **East Aurora**
- Columbus, Indiana
- Charlotte, NC
- Asheville, NC
- Medina
- University Ave. Rochester