

Gloversville City Update 6/14/18

City Awarded Significant Grant to make improvements on Main Street

It was just announced on Tuesday, June 12 that the city was awarded a \$660,000 grant to improve the streetscape on Main Street. This was the result of our submission of a plan last fall aimed at calming traffic speeds and improving pedestrian safety. We will change the curb configuration at crosswalks for pedestrian “bump outs” and improve the crosswalks to give them a higher profile. These changes will clearly convey to drivers that downtown is a pedestrian priority zone.

Downtown Development Strategy Public Unveiling — June 21 at Chamber of Commerce, 2 North Main Street at 6:00 pm:

We have been working on this strategy for re-inventing our downtown for about a year. It has included at least two public meetings and one survey to get input from citizens. Next Thursday evening at 6:00 our consultants will unveil the final draft of the plan, and I am very proud of it. I hope all of you will be able to attend.

It is very innovative and incorporates much of the most advanced thinking on urban redevelopment. It envisions an urban core — (the downtown business district and its surrounding neighborhoods) — which becomes an active and highly populated nucleus that attracts people to live, work and spend leisure time. This will in turn make the whole city more attractive to new residents.

The plan also includes specific action items to be carried out over the next several years so that implementation becomes mandated. Though it envisions a 10 year time line of development. It is my hope that we’ll see significant results within the next couple of years.

The 2018 Round of the DRI — Downtown Revitalization Initiative.

Fortunately, the work we have been doing on the strategy above described has given us a leg up on our application for this third round of the \$10 Million DRI. It was submitted on June 1 and is quite compelling.

Each of the 10 Economic Development Districts in the state is entitled to award \$10 Million to jump start the revitalization of the downtown of one community. A committee of the Mohawk Valley Economic Development Corp will chose a city and make that recommendation to the Governor. He will then make the final choice. Keep your fingers crossed. We could find out any time between the end of August and the middle of October.

Gloversville get two of its census tracts designated a Opportunity Zones.

Our submission of 1st - 5th choice for OZ status has borne fruit. Of the city's 5 census tracts, two of the most well disposed for business development have won this valuable designation by the governor's office. It gives businesses that locate or expand within them special federal tax status which eliminates taxes on capital gains.

We have already received a contact from a new business seeking to locate here to take advantage of these benefits. We hope it is the first of many.

The Cayadutta is newly designated by the state as an inland waterway.

The designation of the Cayadutta as an inland waterway is a huge plus for both Gloversville and Johnstown. If we submit a LWRP (Local Waterfront Redevelopment Plan) any project even remotely related to the creek, even within a few blocks of it, would qualify for 50% grant funding from the state. Any residential project, any commercial project, any recreational or parks project would qualify. And since the creek cuts through the center of both cities, it benefits lots of neighborhoods.

For our part, we have already chosen a planning consultant and have authorized our grant writer, Nick Zabowsky, to apply for a planning grant to pay for their services. The grant will pay for 75 to 85% of the cost of our chosen consulting firm.

Some of our most challenged neighborhoods are proximate to the creek, so within the next few years we may well see a renaissance in these areas in terms of quality of life.

Just wanted to give you a gist of what we have been working on lately. I hope to keep you abreast more frequently as the year progresses. By the end of this month I hope to report to you on changes in the code we are proposing to streamline our efforts in the ongoing war on blight

Vince DeSantis