

Rockland Riverfront Community Council Presentation Narrative

October 1, 2015

Slide 2

Our presentation today will cover

- A description of South Nyack
- Some of the major issues we face
- Current inter-municipal collaborations
- And an initiative for future opportunities for South Nyack

Slide 3

The Village of South Nyack is a small village of less than a square mile.

We have about 3500 residents in 750 residential buildings. There is a mix of single-family and multi-family homes, and only two major apartment buildings.

Median income was about 53 thousand dollars in 2000, and rose to an estimated 92 thousand in 2013.

South Nyack has no commercial district. There is only a handful of businesses within the community.

Slide 4

The Village hosts the Esposito Trail, which is part of the Hudson River Greenway.

We have three small public parks: Elizabeth Place Park, Franklin Street Park, and Gesner Park, which provides South Nyack's only river access for the public.

The New Tappan Zee Bridge will have a new "shared-use" walking and biking path. Its Rockland terminus will be in South Nyack at Exit 10 and will connect to the Esposito Trail.

Slide 5

The Thruway literally bisects the village. The southwestern steep hillside neighborhoods are separated from the riverside half of the village.

Slide 6

South Nyack's hillside is the home of Nyack College.

The College is affiliated with The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

The Nyack campus hosts about 1500 students and offers programs in Arts & Sciences, Business, Music, Nursing, and Ministry.

Recently, we have had discussions with the College about opportunities for greater interaction between the College and the Village of South Nyack and its residents.

It should be noted that the College is tax exempt.

Slide 7

[demographics]

Slide 8

South Nyack incorporated in 1878, splitting off from Nyack in a dispute over street paving.
Our current budget is about 2.5 million dollars.
We enjoy a double A bond rating.

Slide 9

South Nyack has one of the largest percentages of pre-war houses in the Hudson Valley.
Even greater than Sleepy Hollow.

Slide 10

The Village of South Nyack and the neighboring Village of Grandview have a shared police force, which was established in 1982.

A current development project in Nyack will extend the Esposito Trail another block closer to Main Street.

The DPWs of South Nyack, Nyack, and Upper Nyack informally cooperate regularly on various maintenance issues.

We are exploring other opportunities for inter-municipal collaborations, such as:

- The streetlight buy-back program
- Trash and recycling collection
- Placing of historical markers

Slide 11

[Pavion]

Slide 12

South Nyack is currently dealing with a few major issues.

The construction of the new Tappan Zee Bridge affects South Nyack more than any other community.

The Village has worked diligently to minimize and mitigate the impacts of the project on our residents. Construction noise has been a big issue. The Village worked with the State to improve noise mitigations during the pile driving. The State also paid for sound-deadening windows for residents close to the construction.

Slide 13

The new Tappan Zee Bridge is being designed to include a pedestrian and bicycle path, called the "Shared Use Path" or SUP. The path's purpose was purported to be for alternative transportation, but it was clear that it might very well become a draw for tourists. During the project's environmental review

process, the Village objected to the plan, concerned that there was little planning to address the many impacts of the SUP on the Village. These include accommodating the expected SUP visitors, traffic, parking and restrooms.

Under pressure from South Nyack, the State finally conducted a study which estimates a peak of 473 visitors per hour, and a need for 54 parking spaces in South Nyack. We are currently working with the State to develop plans for parking and restroom facilities within the Thruway's right-of-way at Exit 10.

Slide 14

When the Thruway extension came through South Nyack in the 1950s, it literally bisected the Village. And took a large portion of South Nyack's land area.

Slide 15

The Thruway completely eliminated what was South Nyack's downtown.

Slide 16

More than 100 homes were taken.

The downtown of the neighboring Village of Nyack has come to serve as South Nyack's downtown as well.

Since then, the Village has had to sustain itself almost solely on residential property taxes. Over the years, costs keep increasing and our residents have found it harder and harder to be able to afford to live here.

The Village has concluded that this is fiscally unsustainable. South Nyack must find a better business model to fund the services our residents need and deserve in a way that we can all afford.

But we want to do this in a way that doesn't fundamentally alter the quiet, residential character of South Nyack.

Slide 17

We drafted a goal to:

“Restore and maintain the character, identity, and integrity of South Nyack in an economically sustainable manner.”

When the new bridge was proposed, we saw an opportunity to leverage that project to achieve lasting benefits for South Nyack.

Slide 18

When the Thruway was extended to the river, a large interchange, Exit 10, was built in South Nyack. Our research indicates that it was oversized to accommodate a link to the NJ Turnpike, which obviously never happened.

Slide 19

The interchange has been used to park Thruway construction equipment and materials and is now being used by Tappan Zee Constructors as a staging area for the bridge reconstruction. The Village has maintained that this use is incompatible with our village character.

It is certainly possible to redesign the Exit 10 interchange in a way that would dramatically reduce its size and free up a large tract of land. That land is rightly South Nyack's and should be returned to the Village.

Slide 20

The Thruway Authority shared a sketch plan they had been working on that shows such a possible redesign.

The Village recognized that redevelopment of Exit 10 could be used to further our goals for economic development and Village identity.

Slide 21

This came to be known as the Village of South Nyack Economic Sustainability Initiative.

Redevelopment at Exit 10 would foster economic and cultural sustainability for the Village.

Our initiative will provide tremendous benefits:

- Reclaims wasted land for economic development
- Reconnects South Nyack's hillside and riverside neighborhoods
- Re-establishes a Village center, becoming a hub interfacing to the new Tappan Zee Bridge SUP

Slide 22

The initiative proposes to use the area to the northeast of the interchange, vacated by the redesign of Exit 10 for commercial development. This provides a revenue stream to Village, replacing somewhat the commercial ratables lost 60 years ago.

It also proposes to build a "cap" or deck over the Thruway. This would be used primarily as a linear park, to become a new Village center or "green". The cap reconnects the two sides of the Village, healing the gaping wound.

The green also becomes a hub, linking the existing north-south trailways to the new bridge's east-west trailway.

This commercial and recreational hub provides a place to capitalize on the expected users of the new shared-use path.

Slide 23

With a grant from the New New York Bridge Community Development Fund, the Village has engaged a local planning firm, VHB, to conduct a Feasibility Study of our initiative.

We will use the results of the study to determine how we might implement a practical solution that fosters Economic Sustainability and Cultural Sustainability for South Nyack.