

## Rochester Downtown Partnership

### WalkShop Summary

October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

12:00 PM — 1:00 PM

#### Summary:

The Rochester Downtown Partnership conducted a WalkShop on 10/1/22 from 12:00 — 1:00 PM. This outdoor workshop was facilitated by Galin Brooks, President & CEO of the Rochester Downtown Development Corporation and Executive Director of the Rochester Downtown Partnership. Participants were led in a collaborative exercise to share their thoughts, feedback, and impressions of the area. The WalkShop began at Parcel 5 and traveled west along the north side of E Main St. The Walkshop doubled back on the south side of E Main St, stopping at the corner of Franklin St. and East Ave, before heading down East Ave. The WalkShop concluded at the corner of East Ave. and Chestnut St.

Attendance: 13

Feedback from participants is highlighted below. Comments are notated by location.

#### **Northeast corner of E Main St. and Clinton Ave.**

- *Curiosity over what is happening with abandoned buildings on this corner*
- *You can't get into the police station on Clinton Ave*
- *Police station windows are opaque*
- *The street has no window activity*
- *More convenience stores are needed*
- *More color is needed in the built environment – the buildings look drab*
- *Can temporary facades be constructed for empty buildings?*
- *The brightest colored item is the pedestrian crossing sign - signals that this is an environment for cars, not people - like a deer trying to cross the road*
- *Cars speed down Clinton Ave.*
- *The entire Rochester region knows Main St. and Clinton Ave. is a blighted block*
- *The crossing signal in front of the Mercantile on Main does not work properly – it takes too long*
- *Desire for more outdoor restaurant seating – gives a reason to stay*
- *Driving through downtown, it feels like nothing's going on*
- *The parking that was added to E Main St. is good*
- *Streets should be narrowed*
- *Curiosity if something good is coming, because this block [Main St. and Clinton Ave.] is an improvement from past decades*
- *We need services for our homeless population*

#### **Northeast corner of St. Paul St. and E Main St.**

- *More blacked out windows – are they not following transparency guidelines?*
- *In Ithaca, ground floors need to leave the lights on until 9 PM*
- *Participants showed interest in the new zoning code that is being written*
- *Sometimes feels like no one gives a damn about downtown*
- *The neighborhoods think the city spends too much on downtown, participant disagrees*
- *Mayor [Evans] knows downtown is languishing and he wants to change it*
- *Downtown is the face of Rochester*
- *If a BID [Business Improvement District] was created in 1991, downtown would be completely different*
- *There is a fear that BIDs privatize public space*

## **Franklin St. and East Ave.**

- *Street looks unsafe to cross*
- *Street needs more curb and less road*
- *Would like to see a restaurant at the base of One East Ave*
- *A grocery store is needed*
- *A brewing company here would be nice*
- *General lack of amenities*
- *We need a ground floor experimental performance space – Focus Theatre in Sibley Square is not accessible from the street*
- *Feels like buildings are blockaded from the street level instead of being open*
- *There are great spaces within buildings that you wouldn't know unless you have an invitation*
- *Feels like the building owners are scared of the people on the street*

## **East Ave. and Chestnut St.**

- *All the windows at ground level are mirrored, it is not friendly*
- *Desire for more pop-up retail opportunities*
- *The Little Theatre is a gem*
- *What is this parking lot for?*
- *Do we need to keep parking lots for events?*
- *Events should ideally happen in park spaces*
- *Downtown is a sea of parking lots*
- *Desire for pop-up farmers market in a parking lot*
- *There are no food options other than restaurants*
- *Desire for small vending kiosks*
- *Interest in the idea of an urban co-op farm in a parking lot – community gardens*
- *Why don't we close parts of downtown on the weekends and make them pedestrian only?*
- *The Fringe Festival Spiegletent could go in the street if you close it down*
- *Why are we not putting parking lots behind buildings instead of in front?*