



## MANOTICK VILLAGE AND COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### *Our Community's Look to the Future of Dickinson Square*

## INTRODUCTION

Manotick's historic and rural character depends in large part on both the buildings and the lands in Dickinson Square. Indeed, Dickinson Square continues to serve the village as the site of annual celebrations and events of significance such as Dickinson Days and Remembrance Day.

Subsequent to its purchase by the City of Ottawa, for \$2.4 million dollars, city staff were directed to arrange for repayment of this initial purchase price through the sale or prepaid long term lease, of some of the Square's assets. With increasing interest by city staff in following through with this direction, securing the future of Dickinson Square's key role as the historic and rural heart of Manotick emerged, as a theme at all the visioning processes undertaken over the past months. However, the details of how this might be achieved remains unclear.

At the visioning session held in conjunction with our Annual General Meeting, May 31, 2011, MVCA members present (40 people) participated in a 1 ½ hour facilitated session to consider the future of Dickinson Square.

Participants were provided an overview / background of the current situation facing Dickinson Square followed by an assertion that the *status quo* was not an option. One of the sub-themes of this exercise was the recognition that an important prerequisite for the long term survival of Dickinson Square is significant, year-on-year sustaining financial support. To achieve this, it was widely recognized that a mix of commercial enterprise plus public-only and/or public-private partnerships, would be not only necessary, but attractive.

It is also understood that a search for such support will most likely have to encompass a broader catchment area than Manotick and its immediate surrounds. The practical challenge this prospect creates is to capture the optimal balance of revenue-generating facilities to compliment the somewhat less profitable heritage uses for the Square that have been of value to many in the Manotick community.

Participants were invited to work in four breakout groups, each lead by a facilitator, and asked to describe **what a viable Dickinson Square looked like in 2016** (five years hence) and **what made this possible**.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

While group participants came from across the community, each with individual interests and preferences, common visions for the future of the Square, arose from their discussions. In no particular order, they are: (See Appendix A - verbatim group comments.)

1. Arts & Culture / Performing Arts / Stratford in Manotick
2. Heritage / Look, Feel / Character / Ambiance / A Place to Linger
3. Environment / Green Space
4. Commercial / Revenue Generation / Hospitality / Shopping
5. Programming / Public Service / Inclusiveness

When asked what made these visions possible, again the groups all agreed on common actions they believe should be included in the future development of the Square. Again, in no particular order, they are:

1. Strategic planning
2. Positive vision
3. Financial support
4. Village integration
5. Entrepreneurship
6. Funding and political support
7. Community support

## SYNOPSIS

The following are summations of the visions and future actions that were expressed by our members for the future of Dickinson Square.

### Visions

#### **1. Arts & Culture / Performing Arts / Stratford in Manotick**

All groups were convinced on the need for some form of year-round, multi-purpose, cultural arts building with a combined inside / outside performing arts venue and a design that would compliment, highlight and augment the heritage of the Square.

#### **2. Heritage / Look, Feel / Character / Ambiance / A Place to Linger**

It was important to all groups that the present historical character and charm of Dickinson Square needed to be kept, respected and consistent in any changes or additions to the Square. It was felt that the Square needed to continue in its role of a gathering place / a place to linger and enjoy; not only for the community but also for visitors to the village.

### **3. Environment / Green Space**

The lands surrounding the buildings of Dickinson Square were also of prime importance to the groups. Pedestrian access to the open space, gardens and water of the Square were all vital features that the groups felt remain and even increased.

### **4. Commercial / Revenue Generation / Hospitality / Shopping**

All of the groups agreed that there should be and could be plenty of commercial / retail opportunities that would compliment the heritage aspect of the Square and yet, provide commercial services to visitors the Square and Manotick. Several ideas for revenue generation were suggested including new uses for some of the present Square buildings and their properties, to increase the opportunities of revenue and self-sustainability.

One MVCA member (via email and could not participate) felt that Manotick's population base isn't large enough to provide the necessary revenue stream to sustain a Cultural Arts Centre. However, participants felt certain, that the Centre could, as suggested by Dickinson Square Management Inc. (DSHMI), be promoted and used by the broader constituency of Ottawa South who, at present, do not have a similar facility. Participants went on to suggest numerous secondary revenue generating, cultural related usages and activities for this new Centre including opportunities for commercial partnership.

### **5. Programming / Public Service / Inclusiveness**

New non-heritage related ideas for community programming involving all ages arose from group discussions. New homes for the Rural Ottawa South Support Services (ROSSS) and the Ottawa Police Community Centre in the proposed Cultural Arts Centre and as other uses for current Dickinson Square buildings were also discussed.

#### Future Actions

#### **a). Strategic Planning**

It was felt that a comprehensive business case needed to be developed through full, fair and timely community engagement and future management of Dickinson Square be carried out by centralized professional management team and key community leaders, with a mandate to community views using transparent processes.

#### **b). Positive Vision**

It was agreed that in order for development of the Square to continue, there must be a positive vision with openness to new ideas, creativity, leadership and community interest and cooperation.

**c). Financial Support**

For most participants, revenue generation was a priority action that needed to be incorporated into aspects and activities of the Square. Corporate sponsorship and investment, fundraising and user fees were seen as a “must haves” for Square development to proceed.

**d). Village Integration**

It was expressed that the development of Dickinson Square needed to be integrated with a plan for the Mill Quarter and village, through long term leases, parking and traffic control.

**e). Entrepreneurship**

It was suggested that entrepreneurs could be found to undertake various commercial entities that fit well into and respecting the heritage aspect of the Square.

**f). Funding and Political Support**

It was agreed that financial support and “buy in” from all levels of government and Ottawa cultural organizations were extremely important.

**g). Community Support**

Finally, it was expressed that local residents and the business community will need to approach the development of the Square with a willingness to accept a new role for Manotick within the communities of Ottawa South.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The MVCA Board was very pleased with the turnout, cooperative participation and the quality of the ideas expressed by our community members for the future of Dickinson Square.

While many of the visions and actions are very similar to those expressed in the Vision Statement of DSHMI, there are some new and exciting additional suggestions.

## APPENDIX A – Dickinson Square Visioning

MANOTICK VILLAGE & COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

### Dickinson Square Visioning

AGM – May 31, 2011

Following the regular business of the MV&CA Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday, May 31, 2011, the attending membership (40 people) participated in a 1½ hour facilitated visioning exercise on the future of Dickinson Square.

Participants were provided an overview / background of the current situation facing Dickinson Square followed by an assertion that the *status quo* was not an option. Participants were then invited to work in four breakout groups, each lead by a facilitator, and asked to describe what a viable Square looked like in 2016, five years hence, and what made this possible.

The following are the summary themes of each group’s findings presented in plenary:

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Performing arts; Stratford in Manotick; arts &amp; culture;</li><li>▪ Heritage; look and feel; character / ambiance; a place to linger;</li><li>▪ Environment / green space;</li><li>▪ Commercial; shopping; revenue generation; hospitality</li><li>▪ Programming; public service; inclusiveness</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Planning (strategic)</li><li>▪ Positive vision</li><li>▪ Financial; \$\$\$</li><li>▪ Village integration</li><li>▪ Entrepreneurship</li><li>▪ Funding &amp; political support</li><li>▪ Community support</li></ul>

What follows are the *verbatim* comments from each of the four groups.

## GROUP 1

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<p><b>PERFORMING ARTS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Visual arts space</li> <li>▪ Theatre in drive shed</li> <li>▪ Art gallery</li> <li>▪ Indoor/outdoor theatre</li> <li>▪ River run centre for performing arts</li> <li>▪ Cultural arts centre</li> <li>▪ Performing arts summer festival to attract tourists</li> <li>▪ Cultural arts centre that preserves highlights, promotes charm, heritage aspects of current square</li> <li>▪ Galleries and outside areas for musicians and artists</li> <li>▪ Cultural arts centre for all arts</li> <li>▪ Cultural arts centre</li> <li>▪ Cultural centre is hub for an annual cultural festival</li> <li>▪ Outdoor amphitheatre band shell</li> <li>▪ Performance area – weather protected</li> </ul> <p><b>HERITAGE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Re-created carding mill</li> <li>▪ Satellite Upper Canada Village</li> <li>▪ Heritage activities</li> <li>▪ Blacksmith</li> <li>▪ Visual link and respect of cenotaph</li> <li>▪ Heritage showpiece and village character</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMERCIAL \$</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New home for community police</li> <li>▪ Tourist centre</li> <li>▪ Small bistro style restaurants</li> <li>▪ An inn, boutiques, a playhouse, a parkette</li> <li>▪ Restaurant</li> <li>▪ Bakery in one of the houses</li> <li>▪ Merrickville-like waterfront restaurants</li> <li>▪ Restaurant, heritage style</li> </ul>	<p><b>PLANNING (Strategic)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A comprehensive <u>business case</u> that has been developed through full, fair and timely community engagement</li> <li>▪ Professional management</li> <li>▪ Central ownership of lands for rental \$ income</li> <li>▪ Centralized (ORC – window) management corp. with mandate to consider community views <u>and</u> transparent processes</li> <li>▪ Several key leaders overseeing</li> <li>▪ Public and private trusts</li> </ul> <p><b>POSITIVE VISION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Openness to new ideas</li> <li>▪ Creativity</li> <li>▪ Good fundraising</li> <li>▪ Leadership</li> <li>▪ Daring to dream</li> <li>▪ Community cooperation</li> <li>▪ Philanthropist leaves Manotick a legacy</li> <li>▪ A huge community interest</li> </ul> <p><b>FINANCIAL (revenue generation)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Educational facilities generate revenue from whole Ottawa area</li> <li>▪ Development fees kept for Manotick</li> <li>▪ Boat slip overnight fees</li> <li>▪ Revenue from micro-brewery “Tick Ale”</li> <li>▪ Corporate branding</li> <li>▪ Conference centre generates revenue from whole Ottawa area</li> <li>▪ Manotick opens to Ottawa South</li> <li>▪ Willingness of residents to new role for Manotick</li> <li>▪ Entry fees for heritage activities and buildings</li> </ul>

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Underground parking</li> <li>▪ Bus parking</li> <li>▪ Market stalls in carriage house, 4 seasons</li> <li>▪ Micro-brewery in the Mill</li> </ul> <p><b>ENVIRONMENT / GREEN SPACE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pedestrian walkway</li> <li>▪ Public access to the water for recreation</li> <li>▪ Shoreline observation deck adjacent to Mill – perhaps with food and beverages</li> <li>▪ Nature awareness e.g. Gatineau</li> <li>▪ Community garden</li> <li>▪ Arts centre gallery</li> <li>▪ Gardens and open space to complement the water access</li> </ul> <p><b>PUBLIC SERVICE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Educational centre</li> <li>▪ Computer workshop for seniors</li> <li>▪ Exhibit space</li> <li>▪ Hall venue for events, weddings, conferences</li> <li>▪ New home for ROSSS</li> <li>▪ Seniors centre</li> <li>▪ Re-create 2<sup>nd</sup> wing of carriage house</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ 1% of Manotick Village taxes go to maintaining Square</li> <li>▪ Well-maintained rental properties</li> </ul>

**GROUP 2**

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<p><b>STRATFORD IN MANOTICK</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <u>The</u> cultural heritage destination stands out</li> <li>▪ Performing arts centre</li> <li>▪ Lectures series – TED / Manotick Talks</li> <li>▪ Arts centre theatre house</li> <li>▪ Arts /education facility</li> <li>▪ Summer drama</li> <li>▪ Art gallery</li> <li>▪ Venue targets CD release events – targeting cutting edge performance groups</li> <li>▪ Exhibition place for the arts</li> <li>▪ Band shell for outdoor concerts that attract visitors</li> <li>▪ Community performance – drama, music, etc.</li> <li>▪ New cultural centre for South Ottawa</li> <li>▪ Cultural centre with concerts</li> <li>▪ Summer concerts at the park</li> <li>▪ Stratford in Manotick</li> <li>▪ A heritage theatre for plays, concerts</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMERCIAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Outlet store</li> <li>▪ Cafes, boutiques, restaurants and a hotel</li> <li>▪ Farmer’s market</li> <li>▪ Pretty shops that bring people back to a village life – touristy</li> <li>▪ Mill as a restaurant and boutique</li> <li>▪ Restaurant with a view of river</li> <li>▪ Making it more commercial / retail</li> <li>▪ Market outside Mill</li> <li>▪ Mixed use – shops below and condos above</li> <li>▪ Entertainment centre, food / music / dance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tax revenues from commercial and residential development (same as Landsdowne)</li> <li>▪ Sustaining grant from a major benefactor “Minto Heritage Place”</li> <li>▪ Minto</li> <li>▪ Government grant</li> <li>▪ Mill Quarter BIA</li> <li>▪ Bootstrap arts (free, cheap, outdoors)</li> <li>▪ City funding same as Centerpointe</li> <li>▪ Bikeability</li> <li>▪ Parking garage at edge, walkability is the theme</li> <li>▪ Docks; people brought in</li> <li>▪ Organizations behind attracting people</li> <li>▪ Transport: river, 416, bike, walk</li> </ul>

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<p data-bbox="235 233 472 264"><b>ENVIRONMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="285 270 589 302">▪ Boat dock near Mill</li> <li data-bbox="285 308 703 380">▪ A people place with pleasant surroundings and good times</li> <li data-bbox="285 386 729 489">▪ Heritage research centre and demonstration of village life in Police Village</li> <li data-bbox="285 495 675 527">▪ Dickinson House gift shop</li> <li data-bbox="285 533 792 667">▪ Small park surrounded by stores (ladies dress), restaurants, town hall where you can get a walk with historic facts</li> <li data-bbox="285 674 732 743">▪ Walkable destination involving families and seniors</li> </ul>	

### GROUP 3

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<p><b>A PLACE TO LINGER</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Holistic / consistent land use</li> <li>▪ I remember how noisy Bridge St. was before thru truck traffic was prohibited</li> <li>▪ Traffic calmed</li> <li>▪ A pedestrian centered historic area</li> <li>▪ Pedestrian mall, cul de sac, food shops, commercial constraints</li> <li>▪ People gathering spots, e.g. café, wine bar</li> <li>▪ I am glad to see that the cenotaph remains well preserved. It looks good. I'm also glad that space remains for a few hundred people attending</li> <li>▪ Restaurant and tourist-friendly stores</li> <li>▪ A complimentary extension to the Village commercial core</li> <li>▪ Park setting, band stand closed to Bridge St.</li> <li>▪ It is a destination on most major tour companies in the Ottawa area itineraries for tourists to the region</li> </ul> <p><b>CULTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Manotick's 4 season cultural centre</li> <li>▪ The Manotick arts community is hosting the Eastern Ontario watercolour finals in the Visual Arts Centre in the Mill Quarter. This is a major event drawing top artists</li> <li>▪ It is used by a wide variety of community organizations (current and yet-to-be) for their events, meetings, displays, etc., e.g. arts, cultural, sports and recreation, etc.</li> <li>▪ I am going to the community centre to attend an amateur theatrical performance in the Mill Quarter</li> </ul>	<p>\$\$\$</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create an executive authority</li> <li>▪ Wide publicity</li> <li>▪ City of Ottawa support</li> <li>▪ Public relations expert</li> <li>▪ Financial support from Minto</li> <li>▪ Coordinate community groups to raise funds, provide labour</li> <li>▪ Minto</li> <li>▪ An entrepreneur was found who undertook the various commercial entities that fit well into the overall non-commercial theme of the "Mill Quarter"</li> <li>▪ Federal / provincial / municipal funding (grants)</li> <li>▪ Manotick de-amalgamated from Ottawa and the new Village council took this on!</li> </ul> <p><b>VILLAGE INTEGRATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Long term leases</li> <li>▪ City traffic control / parking</li> <li>▪ Arch constraints</li> <li>▪ Plan for whole Mill Quarter, not only City properties</li> </ul>

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “Green” performance centre (indoor / outdoor)</li> <li>▪ Manotick’s cultural showcase</li> <li>▪ Museums, arts and crafts shops, assembly hall with a stage, bookshop, restaurant</li> <li>▪ Education centre focused on mill technology and rural Ontario of 1800s</li> </ul>	

## GROUP 4

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<p><b>ARTS &amp; CULTURE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Artsy cultural stores that draw visitors and locals to the Square</li> <li>▪ Key elements: culture, theatre, art, history</li> <li>▪ Support services e.g. Rosss</li> <li>▪ History</li> <li>▪ Park and theatre centre</li> <li>▪ Outdoor stage (band shell?)</li> <li>▪ Community centre (arts and crafts)</li> <li>▪ Year long program of cultural and historical activities</li> <li>▪ Centre for small conventions</li> <li>▪ Dickinson house renovated as B&amp;B</li> <li>▪ Ayers as convention meeting place</li> <li>▪ Development of the performing</li> <li>▪ Outdoor stage for summer plays and local performers</li> <li>▪ A “Gananoque Playhouse” style theatre for the arts (combined with a senior’s centre)</li> <li>▪ Arts / cultural courses for all ages in one of the buildings</li> <li>▪ Arts facility – focus on the arts for conventions / meetings (Banff!) – think Merrickville</li> </ul> <p><b>PROGRAMMING</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Day care in one of the Mill St. houses</li> <li>▪ Programs for youth and seniors using resources from high schools and seniors’ centre</li> <li>▪ Museum / interpretive centre exploring how Manotick came to be here. Moss Kent Dickinson place in history. Early / first industrial centre. Could be Dickinson House Bank or new bldg. in “E”</li> <li>▪ Focus on education, children, seniors, local talent, e.g. art, crafts, etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ENTREPRENEURSHIP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A vision of commercially supported arts and travel convention destination</li> <li>▪ People with vision</li> <li>▪ Entrepreneur who respects history</li> <li>▪ Entrepreneurs</li> <li>▪ Need risk takers</li> <li>▪ Investment from a variety of businesses and corporations</li> <li>▪ Corporate donation</li> <li>▪ Need a strong anchor business in the Mill (involving alcohol)</li> <li>▪ Have to allow a main draw for revenue in the Mill (like a brew pub)</li> </ul> <p><b>FUNDING &amp; POLITICAL SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ City funding for parks &amp; pathways</li> <li>▪ Making Manotick a destination – customer base</li> <li>▪ City of Ottawa buy-in</li> <li>▪ Support from provincial government</li> <li>▪ Support from heritage group (Feds?)</li> <li>▪ Strong support from local councilor at city hall</li> <li>▪ Lobbying of local politicians – municipal, provincial and federal</li> <li>▪ Canada Council</li> <li>▪ Funding \$</li> <li>▪ Must have key supporter at all political levels</li> </ul> <p><b>COMMUNITY SUPPORT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Village support</li> <li>▪ Support and allow only businesses that meet key criteria</li> <li>▪ Encourage local businesses to get on the band wagon</li> <li>▪ Involvement of the community at</li> </ul>

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Something for all ages</li> <li>▪ Doggie day care</li> </ul> <p><b>HOSPITALITY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Coffee shop, art gallery with work by local artists</li> <li>▪ Parcel A, micro-brewery and outdoor patio</li> <li>▪ A coffee shop</li> <li>▪ Café with patio on the water</li> <li>▪ The Mill is a bakery</li> <li>▪ One building Dickinson House or Bank perhaps should be a restaurant</li> <li>▪ Mill: great restaurant on the river</li> <li>▪ One building should be a bar / restaurant with a river terrace – E</li> <li>▪ The Mill “historical” component co-exists with a hospitality / catering function</li> <li>▪ Mill: restaurant and brew pub (lovely copper vats like “The Canoe Club in Victoria, B.C.)</li> </ul> <p><b>LOOK &amp; FEEL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Businesses willing to forgo traditional garish signage</li> <li>▪ Historical facades have to be maintained</li> <li>▪ Historical anchor, the Mill building</li> <li>▪ Development plan</li> </ul> <p><b>INCLUSIVENESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Focus on the next generation, e.g. children</li> <li>▪ Focus on seniors support</li> </ul> <p><b>GREEN SPACE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pedestrian walkway on Dickinson</li> <li>▪ Street furniture</li> <li>▪ Green</li> <li>▪ People-friendly</li> <li>▪ Dog-friendly</li> <li>▪ Mill St. at Bridge St. closed</li> <li>▪ “Quaint” launch tie-up for canoes and kayaks only, at end of Tight St.</li> </ul>	<p>large</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Community arts and culture organizations work together</li> <li>▪ Strong support from local business and key members of the community</li> <li>▪ Community buy-in</li> </ul>

VISION	WHAT MADE THIS POSSIBLE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Park where the Carriage House is</li> <li>▪ Pathway around the buildings</li> </ul> <p>SHOPPING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Boutiques</li> <li>▪ Boutiques</li> <li>▪ Clapp Lane small shops, Perth look-alike (style)</li> </ul> <p>CHARACTER / AMBIANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ “New England Style Inn” (and spa?)</li> <li>▪ New England “Mystic Connecticut” taste</li> <li>▪ The Mill remains dominant</li> <li>▪ All buildings are part of Manotick’s key elements</li> <li>▪ Like a Norman Rockwell painting</li> <li>▪ Active all year</li> <li>▪ A destination</li> <li>▪ The Mill: like “Wakefield Inn and Spa”</li> </ul> <p>REVENUE GENERATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tourist spot for Ottawa people and generate \$ for local business</li> </ul>	