

Staten Island Advance (NY)

August 3, 2008

Vision for Island takes shape

"The process is going to be about the community. Residents have an opportunity to brainstorm and vision what they see as necessary for Staten Island to be a healthy community." - Adena Long
New group will blend ideas and concerns, whittle them down to broad themes and, ultimately, form a master plan for the borough

KAREN O'SHEA STATEN ISLAND ADVANCE

Adena Long starts a new job tomorrow, managing a massive planning process **for** the entire borough. She was selected by committee to head the planning group known as A **Vision for Staten Island**, an ambitious organization itself in the planning stages **for** the last year and a half.

And if the St. George resident has a **vision for the Island** or ideas about what to change in the borough, she is not spilling the beans.

"If I was to state my opinion, it would sort of negate the whole reason **for** the process and the whole reason it's such an innovative way to plan," Ms. Long said during a recent interview.

"The process is going to be about the community. Residents have an opportunity to brainstorm and **vision** what they see as necessary **for Staten Island** to be a healthy community."

The idea **for** a visioning grew out of round-table discussions at the College of **Staten Island**. That early, broad-based group turned to the firm ACP Visioning and Planning **for** help.

The firm will lead the visioning here, a process which is likely to take about a year and include hundreds of organizations and thousands of people in a series of committee and town hall meetings.

Ideas and concerns are whittled down to broad themes and, ultimately, a master plan **for** the borough.

It's the biggest emerging planning process in what's been a season of planning **for Staten Island** - a place often criticized **for** a lack of **vision** that's contributed over the years to unwanted traffic and unattractive development in some areas or no new growth in places where it's needed.

There are at least a half-dozen different planning processes in the works now, including independent studies of the **Island's** waterfront and manufacturing zoned stretches of the West and North shores.

ISLAND MASTER PLAN

A 2007 study of the borough by the think tank Center **for** an Urban Future recommended creating a master plan **for Staten Island** and putting someone in charge to get it done. Supporters of visioning argue that this is the one plan that complements all others.

"I think what sets this apart from maybe some of the other efforts that have occurred is it's all inclusive and transparent," said Ms. Long, who pointed out that all comments from every meeting will be posted on-line **for** Islanders to read, digest and respond to.

Ms. Long, a Community Board 1 member and former administrator of the Greenbelt who has a master's

degree in nonprofit management from the New School, said \$250,000 **for** the project remains **for** the year. Part of her job will be to secure more money to keep visioning going after that.

The College of **Staten Island** also will provide in-kind funding and support **for** the process.

She doesn't have an office just yet, but Ms. Long said the details of the contract are being worked out now. She plans to meet with members of the visioning team this week.

Patrick McDermott, chairman of the board of directors **for** the **vision** team, said visioning also includes reality check meetings where professionals are brought in to explain to Islanders what's feasible and what's not.

"It's the combination of the desire of the people against the realities which gives you the final **vision**," he said during a telephone interview.

A congress will be formed to vote on a final plan, and the ultimate and most difficult goal is to implement that plan over time.

"We think that by going through the process it will develop a certain momentum to make it easier **for** elected officials to work with the city and make the changes we need," McDermott added.

Karen O'Shea is a news reporter **for** the Advance. She can be reached at oshea@siadvance.com.

Copyright, © All Rights Reserved.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.win2pdf.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.
This page will not be added after purchasing Win2PDF.