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# Renaissance project ties into Narrowsburg plan

## An entryway to a dream

By FRITZ MAYER

NARROWSBURG, NY — The Category C projects are the really ambitious ones. In order to be chosen for it, the project has to be focused on community development, and must be a collaboration between at least two community groups and have youth involvement.

This year, the folks at Sullivan Renaissance will award one of the Category C grants to the Narrowsburg Beautification Group (NBG) for a plan that will enhance the intersection of Bridge and Main Streets, and will also promote a separate project that envisions the construction of an esplanade on the back side of several buildings on Main Street, designed to utilize the ground floor basements for retail establishments and pedestrian activity.

This is the 10th year NBG has been part of the Sullivan Renaissance program, and it's the first Category C project for the group. Wanda Gangel, one of the founders of NBG, said that the project will include bringing water to Veteran's Park where it can be used to water plants and, in the future, a drinking fountain for people and dogs will be installed.

Also this year, the welcome sign will be moved and enhanced, there will be flowers throughout the town, and a new flowerbed installed in the stone work at the 15 Main restaurant. As part of an effort to raise awareness about the plan for the Big Eddy Esplanade, the project includes the creation and display of an artist's rendering of the esplanade in the Narrowsburg Mews building.

The Category C Grant is for \$5,000 with another \$5,000 on completion grant if the proposed work is finished. It also allows the participants to compete for the \$50,000 Golden Feather Award that will be handed out in August.

The Big Eddy Esplanade plan has been on the drawing boards since 1997, when a feasibility study was completed. It was then forgotten until Ed Jackson, the chairman of the planning board, brought it back to life during the update of the Tusten Comprehensive Plan.

Last fall, assemblywoman Aileen Gunther secured a \$78,000 grant for engineering and planning for the project, and the Town of Tusten has agreed to match that amount.

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Jackson said the plan is still very fluid, but essentially calls for the esplanade to start at Veteran's Park, run under the bridge roadway at ground level, past the backs of three Main Street buildings, and then become an elevated deck and continue to a point below the existing observation deck on Main Street, where there would be an amphitheater.

The effort to tie the Renaissance project together with the esplanade effort was pushed forward by Jane Luchsinger, president of the Narrowsburg Chamber of Commerce, who has been working on both projects.

Helen Budrock, a community planner for Sullivan Renaissance, said the Narrowsburg project was chosen to be in the C category this year because Renaissance had been urging the volunteer groups to consider projects that would contribute to the planning and economic development of the community and this one fills that role. She also said she thought the esplanade project had a good chance of becoming a reality.

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