

RIVERSPACE

ARTS IN NYACK

RIVERSPACE DOWNTOWN:

Frequently Asked Questions: General/Arts Center

What is Riverspace?

Riverspace Arts in Nyack is a non-profit organization that is dedicated to creating a vital cultural center. We strive to inspire and engage audiences with innovative and educational programming that embodies the diverse cultures, styles and influences of our region. We present quality programs in theater, dance, film, and music. Riverspace nurtures relationships with neighboring cultural organizations that use our venue to advance their development. We collaborate with schools and community groups to create programs for children and families.

What is Riverspace Downtown?

Riverspace Downtown is a community-fueled, not-for-profit project aimed at ensuring the financial stability of the Arts Center, revitalizing the heart of Nyack, and maximizing potential improvements to local parking, safety, the attractiveness of the town, and the success of village business. In addition to reconstructing the Arts Center, Riverspace Downtown will include an open plaza and new retail, commercial and residential spaces whose proceeds will go entirely to funding the Arts Center.

Why is this project necessary?

Riverspace's current operating model is not economically sustainable. In order to continue our mission of building the community through the arts and education, we need a source of ongoing funds. Redeveloping our current location accomplishes this goal. Riverspace is now paid for by a handful of private funders and concerned citizens; a large number of the management is volunteer; and much of the entertainment is donated. Ticket sales do not come close to covering the cost of operations and overhead. Our mission is to keep ticket prices low so the arts remain accessible to everyone.

What will Riverspace Downtown look like?

We imagine a dramatic, state-of-the-art arts center which would house a large main theater, plus smaller performance and rehearsal spaces and extensive educational activities. In front would be a generous plaza, offering outdoor dining, a beautiful green Veteran's Memorial, and plenty of light and space for outdoor and public events such as the farmers' market. Behind

this, small shops and inviting, well-lit passageways would connect Artopee Way to Main Street. The roughly four acres of land between Franklin and Cedar Streets would return to the original street-plan, featuring through-streets lined with buildings that are harmonious with the historical charm of the village.

Apartments and offices would be on the upper floors, and storefronts would be directly accessible from wide sidewalks. A wide range of sizes and rents for retail spaces, ensuring that the shopping area serves all local residents, and bringing in basic services and everyday business (imagine a butcher, a shoe repair shop, a bagel place) as well as the usual evening visitors. And of course, a parking structure or (preferably) underground parking, creating hundreds of new spots.

What kinds of programs do you imagine in the future?

We imagine the potential for a broadcast facility and a recording studio; a computer, art, and technology center; and other related efforts that could help teach and train our youth. These programs could be housed on the site and funded and operated by other like-minded organizations. We hope to invite local educational institutions to have space for classrooms and programs in the heart of downtown. Other arts and community organizations would be encouraged to participate in the vision that creates a cultural and commercial complex that speaks to all of our neighbors.

How will this answer the needs of the people who live downtown now, even people not interested in the arts?

Riverspace does not expect to answer all the challenges that face our community, but certainly it can play an integral part in a long-term strategy to engage young people in wholesome and enriching, artistic and educational activities. The Riverspace Downtown Project will bring jobs to downtown as the business activity increases. More service related businesses can make life more convenient for downtown residents and attractive public outdoor spaces will benefit all. More residents living downtown, more day-time activities and commerce, better lighting and more pedestrian flow both day and night will make Nyack a safer and more vibrant place for everyone