

# Community Workshop Notes

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**NEWARK'S  
MASTER PLAN**

## Round 1 Community Workshops July 12 - July 27, 2011

This document contains notes from the Round I Newark Master Plan Community Workshops that were held between July 12 and July 27, 2011.

In order to maintain the integrity of the original content, the notes have been edited and formatted only minimally. Notes differ in style and format because they were transcribed by a number of different note takers and facilitators at each of the workshops.

# Community Workshop Notes



## NEWARK'S MASTER PLAN

## Central Business District & University Heights July 27, 2011

### Housing:

- Society Hill housing development and student housing are isolated from each other
- Need more housing for young professionals and university students
- Concern over mixed-use housing driving tax increases
- Hahne building at New St and Broad St is vacant but should be used for housing
- S. Klein building could also be used for housing
- Need more housing options (e.g., reuse existing buildings)
- Housing stock is uneven
- Demolish New Hope Village housing at Norfolk St and Warren St
- Develop artist lofts near NJPAC
- Expand neighborhood boundaries to include more of Society Hill development
- Central Ave Light Rail Station is a good opportunity for transit-oriented development (TOD); consider utilizing the nearby City-owned site *[this was emphasized several times]*
- “Nothing happening” in southeast corner of CBD around Franklin St, Court St, and Mulberry St

### Business & Industry:

- Need healthy food stores (e.g., near dorms on Bleeker St)
- Need more diverse restaurant choices (e.g., near Science Park High School)
- Need more amenities (e.g., drug stores, coffee shops)
- Too many fast food chains and liquor stores
- Need office supply stores
- Need grocery stores
- Pharmacies in area are not zoned for that type of business
- Branford Pl caters to men's clothing – the retail cluster could be expanded (façades here are uniform)

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- Potential for Branford PI to become men's fashion district
- Need more retail along walk from Penn Station to CBD
- Area surrounding Penn Station is currently "a corporate desert" with "no character, no retail"
- Cater to the church brunch crowd
- Need more gyms
- Use parking lots on weekends for farmer / flea markets
- Need more night life in CBD: businesses should stay open later
- Halsey St needs to "fill in the blanks" to become an entertainment district
- Small-scale music venues would add to entertainment options
- Former Westinghouse or Baxter Terrace sites are good locations for large-format retail (e.g., Target) or a supermarket
- Supermarket site opportunity on Central Ave close to Military Park

### **Circulation & Mobility:**

- Light rail to downtown is good
- Central Ave Light Rail Station is a good opportunity for transit-oriented development (TOD); consider utilizing the nearby City-owned site *[this was emphasized several times]*
- Connect universities to downtown and neighborhoods
- Most walkable streets include: James St, Halsey St, Broad St, and Washington St
- Broad St Station is a designated area but nothing is being done there
- Crosswalk timer is not long enough at Broad St and Washington St
- Go Bus rapid transit feels like normal bus service (people use it like a local, slowing it down)
- Bus way-finding is confusing, especially when buses turn off busier/familiar streets
- Too much service parking throughout neighborhoods

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- Bike lanes needed
- Improve traffic signals
- Remove “gerbil tube” bridges from Penn Station to buildings, as they limit street interactions and activity
- McCarter Hwy crossing is unsafe
- The intersection of Washington St and Broad St is very dangerous
- Close off Halsey St near Prudential Arena to pedestrians on weekends from Washington St to Lincoln Park
- Halsey St is neglected at Cedar St to Washington St
- The east side of Broad St across from Military Park needs repair
- Need more crosswalks
- Congestion along Lock St from Warren St to Nesbitt St
- Lack of awareness about subway / light rail
- No connection to southern part of Newark via light rail from the universities
- Connect universities to CBD (e.g., with bike paths)
- Improve access between the different universities
- Central Ave Light Rail Station is a missed opportunity – poor streetscaping and lighting
- New St between Morris Ave and Norfolk St feels dangerous and fragmented
- Improve walkability to and from Broad St Station behind Rutgers Business School and main campus (at New St)
- Sussex Ave is a “raceway” – eliminate highway off ramp and divert traffic to Central Ave
- Dangerous intersection at State St and MLK Blvd
- Signal problems on Broad St at Raymond Blvd and Washington St
- Difficult to get from light rail to University Heights Charter School (located at Hartford St and Morris Ave)

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- I-280 disconnects neighborhoods from parks (need bike / pedestrian paths along Clifton Ave)
- Need more street parking (make it free on weekends?)
- Dead, dangerous streetscape on Central Ave from Newark St to Hecker St
- Academy St has potential
- More lighting needed on Broad St and Market St

### **Public, Cultural & Educational Resources:**

- More outdoor seating needed [*this was emphasized several times*]
- Washington Park needs benches for people to eat lunch
- Need public restrooms in parks
- PSE&G Plaza is dead
- Increase hours of operation at the Newark Public Library
- Riverfront Stadium is a possible asset to build off of

### **Historic Resources:**

- Dilapidated buildings across from Military Park on Broad St
- The Hahne and S. Klein buildings are historical but deteriorating
- James St Commons should not be designated as part of University Heights
- Historic dormant properties
- Churches as assets
- Restore Paramount Theatre
- Preserve old Essex County Jail
- Put up markers of historic assets and districts
- The Newark Public Library is an incredible historic asset

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- Signage on old buildings is an issue (it is too big and obfuscates the historic buildings) – improve streetscape

### Open Space & Natural Resources:

- Rutgers campus could use a park somewhere between Warren St and Central Ave near Lock St
- Washington Park is an asset
- Create new park space on old Westinghouse site (between Orange St, I-280, University Ave, and MLK Blvd)
- Activate riverfront with new park(s)
- Plant more trees on Broad St, especially in the southern section of the neighborhood
- The area between NJPAC and Newark Museum (along Central Ave) is filled with chain-link fences, has poor lighting, and is seen as a “waste land”
- Create a bike path along Norfolk St connecting Branch Brook Park to Weequahic Park
- Rezone waterfront for public access
- Students at North Star Academy Charter School need better access to parks
- Turn some parking behind Prudential Arena into park space
- Expand Boys Park to capture surrounding vacant land and abandoned buildings
- Need benches in Military Park and Washington Park *[this was emphasized several times]*
- Conceive Military Park as a “community engine” with increased programmatic opportunities for youth
- Public spaces have been designed to discourage people from congregating there
- Military Park and Washington Park should have more regular programming
- Enable canoeing and kayaking along riverfront

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## **Utility Services & Infrastructure:**

- Garbage is dumped in vacant lots on S Orange Ave and Prince St
- Garbage collection is an issue