

Community Workshop Notes



**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.

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NEWARK'S MASTER PLAN

Forest Hill & North Broadway July 18, 2011

Housing:

- “No” to mixed-use development in Forest Hill
- Concerns about vacant / abandoned parcels
- Vacant housing along Valentine Ave and Highland Ave
- No affordable housing
- Mixed-use opportunities along Broadway
- Legalize conversions from foreclosed / abandoned homes to condos or higher density housing (e.g., along 2nd Ave, Verona Ave, and Montclair Ave)
- Residential development potential north of Herbert Pl and east of Broadway

Business & Industry:

- In general, businesses tend to get better as you travel north
- Not enough healthy food stores, supermarkets, or restaurants – people must travel to Belleville for shops
- Potential supermarket or farmers market sites near Irving St and Broadway
- More quality shops and diverse restaurants needed on Verona Ave near Mt Prospect Ave
- Coordinate with Mt Prospect Ave BID to participate in Adopt-a-Lot Program
- Riverfront presents job opportunities, but several warehouses are abandoned and contaminated
- “Industrial dump” on waterfront south of Mill St, east of Washington Ave, and north of Verona Ave: vacant sites should be redeveloped, and any active industry should be relocated
- Clifton Ave could be a more commercial street
- Bloomfield Ave is a missed commercial opportunity; it could be both multicultural and diverse in terms of retail types (e.g., cafes, flower shops, department stores).

Circulation & Mobility:

- Good walkability in Forest Hill (e.g., Lake St, Montclair Ave)

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- Speeding on Clifton Ave
- Clifton Ave needs to have greater enforcement of restrictions on commercial vehicles
- Speeding on Kearny St approaching lower Broadway
- Speeding on Lake St and Degraw Ave (cars try to avoid stop lights on nearby streets)
- Grafton Ave between Degraw Ave and Branch Brook Park needs resurfacing
- Empty buses drive down Highland Ave as a shortcut back to their routes (they speed)
- Not enough parking on Mt Prospect Ave and Bloomfield Ave
- A pedestrian plaza on Mt Prospect Ave would be welcome
- Chester Ave is the only way to access the riverfront
- Davenport Light Rail Station is unsafe
- Potholes on Ridge St and Grafton Ave
- Need more parking on Bloomfield Ave and Beaumont Pl
- Difficult to get from public housing on riverfront to Branch Brook Park
- Consider extending light rail from Branch Brook Park to Highland Ave and Manchester Ave
- Bloomfield Ave Light Rail Station needs more lighting
- No access to crosstown buses
- Too many stop lights on Clifton Ave divert speeding traffic to side streets
- Need more crosswalks to parks (as already done at Ballantine Pkwy and Lake St)
- Connect Grafton Ave to waterfront
- Create angled parking on Mt Prospect Ave
- Need more parking near light rail stations
- More buses needed to the airport
- Revive old Tiffany train station

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Public, Cultural & Educational Resources:

- Newark Housing Authority (NHA) recreation center under construction is out of the way
- Ridge St Elementary School (between Grafton Ave and Montclair Ave) has empty lots on both sides that could be used as community gardens
- Connect schools on Elwood Ave to new NHA recreation space
- Schools need parks nearby
- City-owned vacant lots on Mt Prospect Ave and Ballantine Pkwy should be turned into a community recreation / art center
- Closed Boys and Girls Club – need recreation facilities for this area
- Redevelopment opportunity on Mt Prospect Ave and Chester Ave at the abandoned mansion

Historic Resources:

- Need signage indicating and celebrating Forest Hill as an historic district along sidewalks
- Historic character needs to be preserved consistently throughout the district: the area north of Grafton Ave is currently not treated the same as the area south of Grafton Ave
- Need enforcement of historic district codes – no changes to exteriors
- “Great old homes” in Forest Hill
- Churches and synagogues

Open Space & Natural Resources:

- Backyard culture in Forest Hill
- Flooding problem in Branch Brook Park from where Ballantine Pkwy ends and Davenport Ave begins
- Community garden opportunities on foreclosed and vacant parcels throughout the neighborhood
- Renovate Mt Prospect Park

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- A dog park in Branch Brook Park would be welcome
- Open space opportunity on riverfront at Chester Ave
- Housing around Broadway needs more access to open space
- Closed down school near industry (i.e., Elliott St Elementary School) could be a community garden
- Vacant lots could be added to Branch Brook Park
- Mt Pleasant Cemetery: extend green space to riverfront
- Need more smaller parks near schools
- Old railway between Sylvan Ave and Verona Ave can be dangerous and is not well maintained
- There is a general need for more trees as you move east throughout the neighborhood
- Phillips Park is an asset
- Need better and more lighting on Bloomfield Ave in Branch Brook Park: this stretch should be more pedestrian friendly
- Need more benches in Branch Brook Park
- Only place for valuable open space is on waterfront between Herbert Pl and Delavan Ave
- Ridge St Elementary School (between Grafton Ave and Montclair Ave) has empty lots on both sides that could be used as community gardens
- Schools need parks nearby
- Branch Brook Park needs more benches along pathways through middle of park
- Tennis courts cannot be used but could be an asset
- Need basketball courts and playgrounds in northern Branch Brook Park

Utility Services & Infrastructure:

- City could distribute garbage collection bins

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- Garbage problem on Mt Prospect Ave and 2nd Ave
- Garbage bins are not well maintained