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**Section 2**

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

# DRAFT PURPOSE

The Canal Village Revitalization Project in Mount Vernon is a unified planning effort, resulting from two grants that the City secured from the New York Department of State, to be used for revitalization efforts within the industrial area along the waterfront of the Hutchinson River.

In order to develop a vision for Mount Vernon that excites the city, it is important to establish a strategy for engaging the community. Members of the community are the most knowledgeable about their neighborhoods – what they like and dislike, what they see as opportunities, and what they would like their city to ultimately become. The team has communicated the following to the community: who is involved in the project, background information, the goal of the exercises, and where and how to become involved. The team has also explained to citizens about the process and let them know that their feedback is wanted and important to the success of the project. Information has also been

provided to citizens regarding future involvement and next steps.

An essential part of the public participation process for the Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization plan includes interactive workshop meetings. A series of these workshops were held, with the goal of establishing the community’s vision for the future of Mount Vernon. Public input is critical, because it not only gives informed opinions and decisions, but also generates a sense of ownership from the community regarding ideas and strategies; it also helps to establish a personal connection to the vision. The workshop and meeting schedule is listed elsewhere in this section of the report.

Integral to the success of the workshop meetings have been public outreach techniques, including identifying key stakeholders, organizations and agencies within the community and region at large. Without effective outreach methods, it would be difficult to obtain the critical input and feedback from members of the community. An effective outreach strategy has been developed and is described in the subsequent text; it is designed to encourage maximum participation.

## Who’s Who

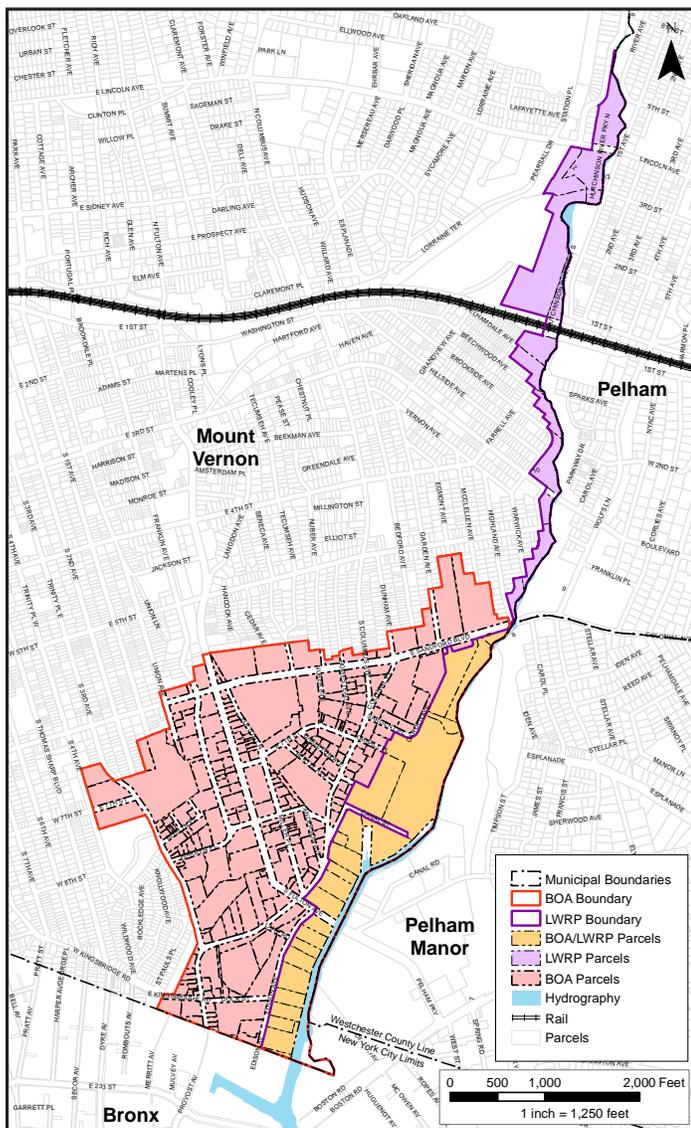
A project of this nature requires the participation of community members who care about Mount Vernon. This includes groups and organizations that have a stake in the success of the City and this neighborhood.

### The Public

The public is considered to be all residents and business owners in Mount Vernon, members of neighboring communities who frequent the project area, and other agencies and organizations that have a stake in the vitality of the Canal Village area. All members of the public have been strongly encouraged to participate in the development of the Area-Wide Plan. The roll of the public has been to tell the City and the consultants what issues are the most important to them, and ideas for solutions. The public helped frame the vision and told the consultants and the City how the neighborhood should improve over time.

### Partners

As the project continues, partners have and will be sought to help implement the outcomes of this planning effort. Partners will be devoting their own time and funding towards getting built results. So far, the partners with an interest in the neighborhood include:



Above: Map of Project Boundary Area.

### *The Hutchinson River Restoration Project*

The Hutchinson River Restoration Project started with an effort to have the salt marsh habitat of Thomas Pell Sanctuary cleaned up. The marsh is accessed through the Hutchinson River which is the source of most of the pollution affecting it. Members have actively participated in workshops and will assist where possible in efforts to clean up the river and promote the use of recreational improvements.

### *Mount Vernon Industrial Development Agency*

The Mount Vernon Industrial Development Agency (“MVIDA”) is a public benefit corporation authorized by the State of New York. The mission of MVIDA is to promote, develop, and assist businesses seeking medium- to long-term financial assistance for eligible projects in the areas of manufacturing, warehousing/distribution, and mixed-use developments such as housing and retail facilities in the City of Mount Vernon. MVIDA’s overall goal is to attract and create job opportunities and economic vitality for the ultimate benefit of its residents.

### *Mt. Vernon Chamber of Commerce*

The director for the Mount Vernon Chamber of Commerce is also on the Steering Committee for this project. The Chamber will promote business development in the neighborhood and will help future activities for the area. Coordination with local business and property owners will be important to promote and market Canal Village area on a regional scale by increasing public recognition and reputation within the community amongst consumers, and other business leaders. The Chamber can also assist business and property owners in Canal Village through education, networking opportunities, guidance in community and government affairs, public policy advocacy, planning, and branding and marketing.

### *Additionally...*

We anticipate within a year or so the formation of a local not-for-profit organization whose members will include the local property owners. Their purpose will be to continue the improvement efforts started with this planning process and to work with government to pursue implementation projects. This initiative has grown out of this project’s community process.

## **The City**

The Mayor and City Council, a Steering Committee, and City staff from the Planning and Community Development Department and the Recreation Department will all have a part in the planning process. The City has been involved throughout the process helping promote public events, attending meetings, and reviewing the relevant plan documents as they are being created. The consulting team works closely with City staff throughout all phases of the

process, as well as, meet with the Steering Committee periodically throughout the public process and during the preparation of the two project reports, one for each grant.

## **The Steering Committee**

The Steering Committee is made up of a mixture of residents, business owners, and City staff who are guiding major decisions for the project. The Steering Committee serves as community experts and provide insight and guidance to the consulting team. Steering Committee members are:

- Irwin Davidson — Chair
- Louis Giannini
- Marcus Griffith
- Darryl Selsey
- Manny Munoz, Jr.
- Dwayne Brown

## **The Consultant Team**

The consultant team is comprised of firms and organizations with strong local, regional, and national reputations in their respective fields. It consists of urban designers and planners; environmental engineers; public policy specialists; economists; industrial, commercial, and retail specialists; employment experts; and transportation engineers. Their years of experience bring practical knowledge and best practices to inform the public process and recommendations. The firms for the consultant team are:

- Dover, Kohl & Partners
- GEI Consultants, Inc.
- Pace University, Land Use Law Center
- Urbanomics
- Barretto Bay Strategies
- Larisa Ortiz Associates LLC
- Maser Consulting, Inc.

The picture to the right highlights Canal Village area in an aerial image.



# THE PROCESS, IN SUMMARY

The project began for the consultant team on October 15, 2016 with a kickoff meeting that was held at Mount Vernon City Hall. The consultants then began their analysis of the existing conditions in the Canal Village neighborhood and the Hutchinson River waterfront. On February 16, 2017, the City held the first meeting of the project's steering committee who helped organize the public outreach and have been involved to guide the visioning efforts and content of the planning effort.

The techniques used to attract participants is described in the next chapter of this Section 2. The centerpiece of public participation has been focused around a sequence of three interactive work sessions:

1. **The 1st Workshop** was held on March 16, 2017 from 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm at the Benjamin Turner Middle School located on the edge of the Canal District project boundary. The public received presentations from the consultants about their initial findings from studying the site. After the presentations, the members of the public were divided into small groups and they discussed the constraints for the area and how they would like the neighborhood to be in the future. They marked up maps and prepared written lists of ideas and then one or two persons from each group presented their ideas to all the participants in the room.
2. **The 2nd Workshop** was held on July 25, 2017 at the same time and place. During the intervening time between the two workshops, the consultants had been further studying the site and formalized the vision and goals based on the questions and suggestions from the community. At the beginning of this workshop, the consultants presented additional observations and showed the key concepts of the master plan for the neighborhood and river frontage. At various parts of the presentation, the participants were asked polling questions and their responses were tabulated in real time using radio signaled keypads that had been passed out. The consultants received immediate response to the various preferences and design concepts shown on the screen, which offered the opportunity to collectively talk further about those points. Afterwards, the participants were asked to visit the presentation boards set up around the room and arranged by topic to leave comments and suggestions either verbally with a team member or by marking up the drawings and illustrations mounted to the boards. This provided the participants with an opportunity to speak directly with members of the consultant team to explain additional details and to answer further questions.

3. **The third Workshop** was held on September 7, 2017, also at the Benjamin Turner Middle School. At this workshop, the consultants presented the contents of a refined version of the draft project reports. In a similar format to the 2nd Workshop, the participants used keypads to answer polling questions about the intended master plan. There were presentation boards set up around the room so the participants could study some of the graphics better and for writing comments and suggestion upon them.

Near the close of each of the three workshops, participants were each handed a survey offering them the opportunity to leave any further comments and suggestions. These questions were broad, such as, "Of the many things you heard here tonight, which do you think is the most important?" and "Is there anything else you want to tell us?"

The internet site, MySidewalk, served as the way for participants to download flyers, maps, presentations, and reports: [www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com](http://www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com). After the second workshop, if anyone had missed the event, they could download the presentation and answer the same questions used in the live poll. Those responses have been combined. Notice of this opportunity after the second workshop was emailed out to the entire contact list for the project. After the third workshop, the same opportunity was available.

Additional meetings were held specifically for the property and business owners within the project area. Prior to the first of those meetings, Pace University conducted a business survey going door to door on June 9, 2017. While talking with the business owners, they passed out the notice for the first meeting that took place on June 20th. The second and third meetings were held the morning after the last two workshops. The property and business owners know the problems and opportunities of the neighborhood quite well and were more comfortable sharing their insights in an informal setting. The first meeting took place at the Columbus Diner within the project area, another at the Benjamin Turner Middle School, and last two were hosted by 661 Club located within the neighborhood.

Following the workshops, the draft of the two project reports were refined and the consultants met with the leaders of neighboring communities and state regulators to fine tune the BOA Nomination report and the plan for the Hutchinson River Waterfront.

Once the drafts are finalized, after they are approved by the State, the consultants intend to present an overview of the project to the city commission during a regularly scheduled meeting.

# TECHNIQUES TO ENLIST PARTNERS

The following list describes the outreach techniques and methods used by the project team for public engagement. Under each method, the leader for each item (either the City or Consultant) is Identified.

## 1. Growing the Contact List (postal and email)

At the start of the project, there was no list of contacts started for this project. The consultants began by creating a list of job positions like “public works director” and “chamber of commerce director” that had names and contact info added with local assistance. Operationally, each department and elected official at City Hall has their own contacts lists that they use for email blasts. They were unable to share those lists with the consultants directly, so the project contact list started out very short. After the first workshop, the contacts increased in length by way of sign-in sheets, and from a list of city-wide homeowners’ associations from the planning department, and addresses of businesses and property owners obtained from the appraiser’s office.

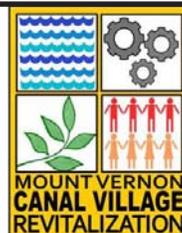
Additional names were collected from steering committee members, a few of the participants in meetings emailed names to the consultants, and the list of local businesses were checked and expanded when Pace University conducted a business owners survey by knocking on doors in the Canal Village area. The list is stored in a master excel file by the consultants from which mailing labels can be printed. It will be given to the city upon completion of the project.

## 2. Postcard or Flyer: Save the Dates

“Save the Date” cards, “Plan to Attend” cards, plus flyers were used at multiple times to attract participants. For the first workshop, a detailed flyer was mailed out and posted within the neighborhood. It contained information about the project and an explanation for why it was important for the public to attend. The Save-the-Date and reminder cards were mailed out for each of the workshops to the property and business owners and the city wide HOAs. The City Planning Department also went door to door to hand out flyers.

# SAVE *the* DATE

March 16, 2017 - 6:30PM - 9:30PM



## March 16 - Workshop I

**Location: Benjamin Turner Middle School (former Longfellow M.S.)**

**Interactive exercises to formulate an initial vision for the Canal Village.**



Check out [www.canalvillagerevitalization.com](http://www.canalvillagerevitalization.com) for Project Updates!

### Why is this important?

The New York Department of State recognized that our state has an enormous supply of industrial lands that are vacant, underutilized, and may be polluting the earth below them. The City of Mount Vernon wants to explore and strategize new economic and physical possibilities for the Canal Village and collectively envision a vibrant future for this important part of our community.

### Join Us!

If you would like to see the Canal Village in our City be able to:

- attract new businesses offering more jobs within the City;
- increase the tax base;
- make the area more attractive;
- clean up environmental hazards;
- improve access to public parks and recreational facilities;
- improve community pride;

**We need you** to join us in preparing the vision and the plans!



### 3. City Website and MySidewalk Website

On the home page of the City's website there is a dynamic banner that announces key events and projects at the City. Clicking on the banner takes the viewer to a webpage dedicated to the project. This page has general information about the project and has a link to the MySidewalk page for more current information. The calendar of events on the City's website also shows the dates of public workshops for this project.

The MySidewalk page is maintained by the consultants because it is faster to update and modify as the project progresses. At the MySidewalk site, the viewers can download notices about meetings, maps, background information, presentations, and draft reports as well as respond to questions for the consultant team to gather further content input beyond the live workshops.

### 4. City Department Meetings

At the beginning of the project, the City staff and Consultants went door to door inside City Hall to meet with each of the department heads to tell them about the project and co-op their participation and support. The Mayor's Office, The Recreation Department, the Library, and Planning Department have been very helpful throughout the process.

### 5. Invitation Letters

Two weeks prior to the first workshop, formal letters of invitation were mailed to the City's +40 Homeowner's associations that announced the project, gave background information, and explained why it was important for them and their members to attend. This letter was also sent to each of the business owners in the neighborhood. City officials received invitations from the planning staff and Mayor's office.

### 6. Personal Phone Calls

The Mayor, members from the Office of the Mayor, the Planning Department, and the steering committee have all made personal phone calls prior to events reminding folks about the desire for and importance of their attendance. The consultants were made aware of this and initial comments from the recipients of the calls. As more business owners have attended meetings, they too have been making phone calls.

### 7. Flyer Announcement

Flyers were produced at various times in the process. The first one was sent out at the beginning of the project announced the project by explaining the City had received the two grants. It stated:

- why this project is important,
- how the project will be completed by using public workshops,
- the expected results,
- who the consultants are, and
- a description and map of the public boundaries.

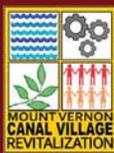
There was also an 11x17 version that was offered to business owners to display on bulletin boards and store windows, but this was not too successful given the industrial buildings do not have as many storefront windows like a retail main street does. The 11x17 format was not continued for subsequent workshops.

For the second workshop, a flyer was not produced but a postcard was used instead and mailed out.

For the third workshop, the flyer was mailed out and handed out to businesses and others at City Hall. It was a two sided 8.5x11 formatted sheet that announced the time, date, and location for the 3rd workshop, and it explained what was to be presented and it requested public participation.

### 8. Announcements by Clergy

The Mount Vernon Council of Churches is an organization comprised of local clergy with influence throughout the City. Their president has been sent information to share with the local pastors so that they could inform their respective congregations.



# Canal Village Revitalization Workshop #3

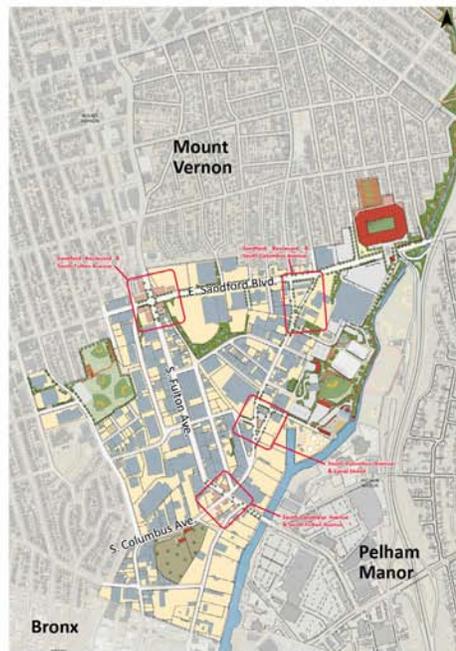


**September 7, 2017** 6:30 pm  
to  
Benjamin Turner Middle School (Longfellow) 9:00 pm

Come to the **FINAL WORKSHOP** for the Canal Village Revitalization. At this meeting, the consultant team will present the culmination of initial findings, and ideas from the previous two workshops. This workshop will give you the chance to provide your input on the draft of the report that will be sent from Mount Vernon to New York State.

Your input at this meeting is valued and appreciated as the report is being prepared for submission.

Don't miss your chance to give feedback on the vision of the Canal Village!



Draft visualization of one Memorial Field option

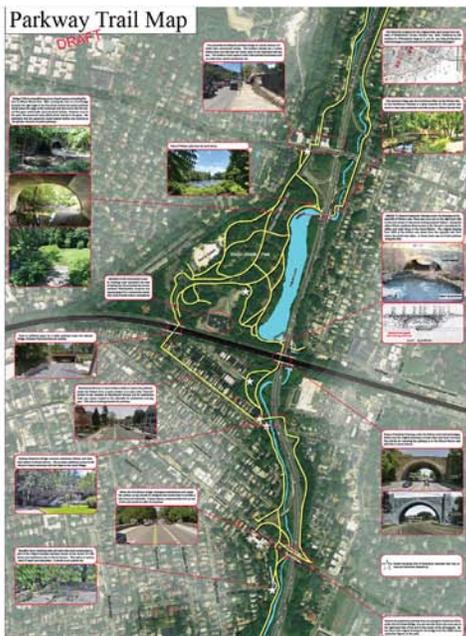


Draft visualization of structures

Draft visualization of the Canal Village Illustrative Plan



Draft visualization of South Fulton Ave. and East Sandford Blvd.



Draft visualization of the Hutchinson River Parkway revitalization

## What will we see?

The presentation for this workshop will include information from the previous two workshops. As the project continued to develop, specific ideas and themes emerged. Come and give your input on these ideas which include:

- Improving the Hutchinson River Parkway Trail
- Promoting job growth in the neighborhood
- Improving streets and infrastructure
- Improving the sense of place in the neighborhood
- Revitalizing Memorial Field
- Promoting local history and industry
- Creating more connections to the Hutchinson River
- Providing more options for entertainment

Want to see the previous presentations again, or catch up? Go online to view presentations from the last two workshops, read initial reports, and answer survey questions at:

[www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com](http://www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com)



Draft visualization of South Columbus Ave. and Canal St.



Draft visualization of streets and urban design

**9. Continuing efforts to Identify and Establish Partners**

This project is a continuing effort and thus the effort to establish partners will continue as well. The City will continue to recruit help. The prospect of the property owners establishing their own not-for-profit organization will mean that they can be the recipient of grants separately from the City and will be able to help with improvements with less bureaucracy. The list of possible future partners includes:

- Additional City elected officials, staff, and board members

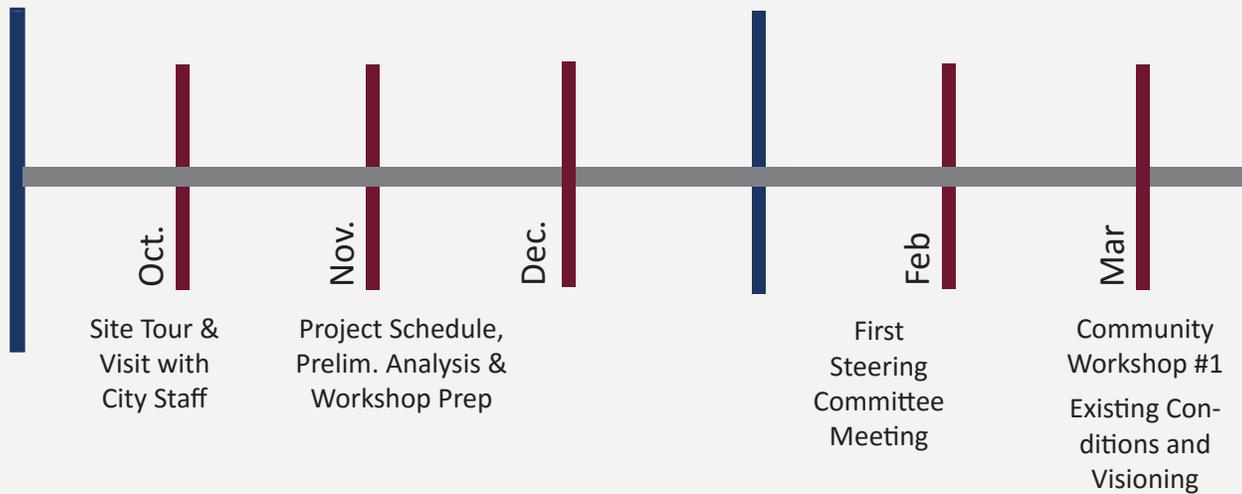
- Historic Development Commission
- Historic Mount Vernon Preservation Society
- New York State Port Authority
- New York Department of Transportation
- Additional Property Owners
- Local Realtors
- Neighborhood Groups
- Public Utilities
- School Board
- Active residents

**TIMELINE**

**Fall 2016**

Project Start

January 2017



Site Analysis



Planning Workshops



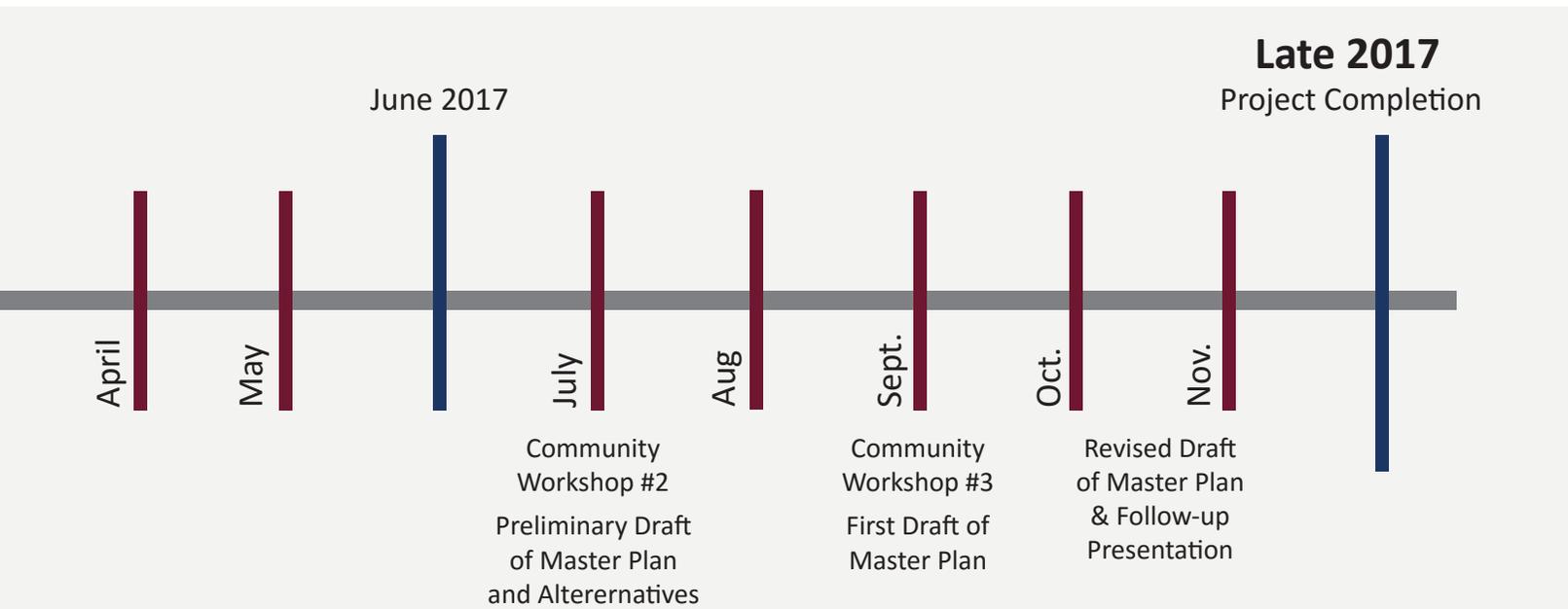
# THE PUBLIC COMMENTARY

Here is the list of events for the general public:

- March 16, 2017 Workshop #1, 6:30 pm, at the Benjamin Turner Middle School
- June 9, 2017 door to door business survey (this was not a public meeting but it was an opportunity to gather public comments)
- June 20, 2017, 7:30 am, at the Columbus Diner, Meeting with the property owners focus group
- June 20, 2017, 4:30 pm, at the Middle School, additional Meeting with the property owners focus group
- July 25, 2017, Workshop #2, at the Benjamin Turner Middle School

- July 26, 2017, 2nd meeting with property owners focus group, at Club 661, on Columbus Street
- September 7, 2017, Workshop #3, at the Benjamin Turner Middle School
- September 8, 2017, 3rd meeting with property owners focus group, at Club 661, on Columbus Street

As already stated, additional commentary in input was collected with the on-line interface with MySidewalk. Summaries of the meetings for the public is shown on the next few pages after the timeline.

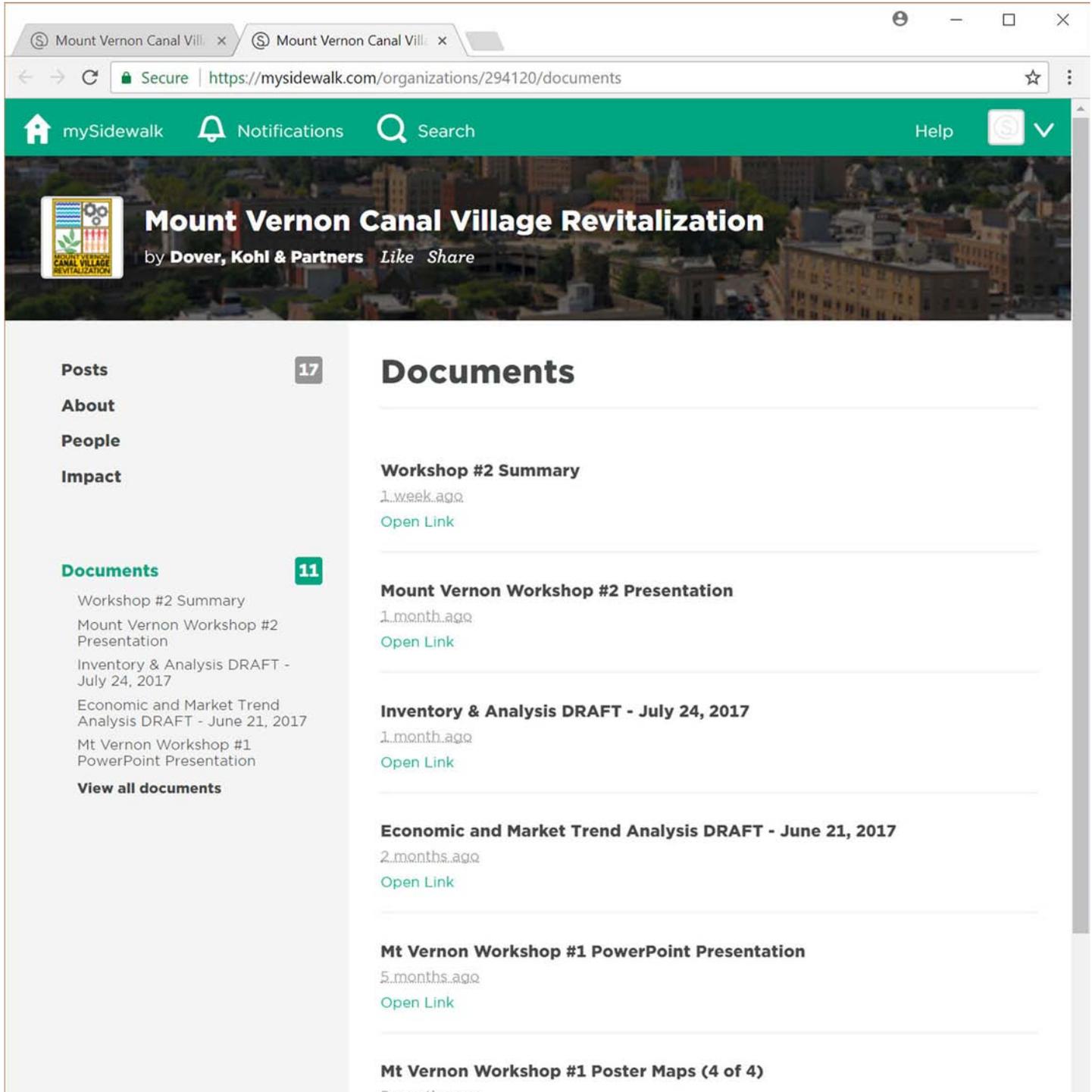


# CONTINUED ONLINE ENGAGEMENT

MySidewalk.com is the tool used for online engagement. It has complemented the traditional design and planning engagement process used for this project. Its main purpose is to serve as a central location for information for those folks actively participating in the public process by providing notices of events and providing files for download, such as maps of existing conditions, preliminary reports of work in progress. The utility for polling questions has been used to

get additional feedback from people who could not attend one or more of the events. As the process has continued, additional information is posted.

As of August 26, 2017, various postings have viewed more than 10,800 times, however only 28 persons have taken the time to answer questions. Despite the low number of active survey takers, this shows that there is sincere interest in the project and the utility is helping participation.



Mount Vernon Canal Villi x Mount Vernon Canal Villi x

Secure | https://canalvillage.mysidewalk.com

Home Notifications Search Help

**Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization**  
by **Dover, Kohl & Partners** Like Share

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**Documents** 11

Workshop #2 Summary  
Mount Vernon Workshop #2 Presentation  
Inventory & Analysis DRAFT - July 24, 2017  
Economic and Market Trend Analysis DRAFT - June 21, 2017  
Mt Vernon Workshop #1 PowerPoint Presentation

[View all documents](#)

August 4  
**Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization** posted  
**Would you enjoy riding a bike in the Canal Village neighborhood if it felt safe to do so?**  
*#Wellness, #Transportation, #Livability in Mount Vernon, NY*

Sure!  
 Probably not  
 Maybe

**Vote**

[Like](#) [Share](#)

August 4  
**Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization** posted  
**How often to you leave Mount Vernon for entertainment, or recreation purposes?**  
*#Arts, #Economy, #Livability in Mount Vernon, NY*

Every Day  
 Around once a week  
 Around once a month  
 Around once a year

# SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP #1

On Thursday March 16, 2017 the first workshop for the Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization was held from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the Benjamin Turner Middle School. The project team presented to a room of 45 community members including key stakeholders, and city officials. Initial findings maps were on display for participants to view and discuss prior to the official start of the meeting. Mayor Richard Thomas introduced the initiative to the congregation, highlighting the history of Mount Vernon and the importance of community involvement in crafting the vision for the future of the project area.

## Initial Findings Presentation

Joseph Kohl and Hernan Guerrero from Dover, Kohl & Partners discussed the goals of the two grants that are funding the project, what the team hoped to achieve throughout the course of the various workshops, and what the timeline for the process would include. The Canal Village website, [www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com](http://www.canalvillage.mysidewalk.com) was also introduced and participants were encouraged to visit the website as a way to engage with the initiative and to continue to provide more feedback and ideas.

Victor Dover presented possible opportunities for the area that identified existing conditions in a “Food for Thought” presentation. Photographs from the Canal Village illustrated existing conditions of streets, public lands and spaces, and architecture of the project area. Noting the industrial character of the site, examples of similar locations that had successfully implemented improvements while maintaining existing businesses were presented. Strategies included low-impact improvements to public spaces, existing buildings and green infrastructure in order to make places more pedestrian friendly and inviting.

An analysis of economic conditions was presented by consultants Tina Lund from Urbanomics and Larisa Ortiz from LOA. Information included: population growth projections, labor force participation & earnings, a study of major employers, trade areas, and trends. Infographics were shown to describe the potential market and reach of the Canal Village commercial and industrial sectors. Initial recommendations were suggested for participants to consider for implementation.

The event continued with a briefing to explain the goals for the table session portion of the evening, introducing



Mayor Richard Thomas welcomed the participants.



Deputy Planning Commissioner Danielle Scholar introduced the project.



The consultants began the presentation by explaining the purpose.

## Big Ideas

After the Hands-On Design Session, the participants summarized their conversation into “Big Ideas”. The goal of this exercise is to focus in on the main themes for their proposed solutions to help frame the vision for the future of the Canal Village. They were told to “dream big!”

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a Hutchinson River PARK, connecting various elements with a GREENWAY, BIKEWAY and improvements to the Hutchinson River.</li> <li>2. Focus on attracting the CREATIVE CLASS, technology sector and entertainment industry (TV, movies, etc.) in the BOA using a mix of building uses.</li> <li>3. LEVERAGE and enhance the presence of St. Paul’s Church National HISTORIC SITE.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. SAFE ROADS and WALKING PATHS, or trails around the LWRP and BOA area.</li> <li>2. SAFE CONNECTIONS from school to parks</li> <li>3. More amenities for workers such as RESTAURANTS.</li> <li>4. Increase retail opportunities to create a shopping center.</li> <li>5. Provide social outlets such as picnic areas, or AMPHITHEATER near the Hutchinson River.</li> </ol> |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement more GREEN SPACE and GREEN CONNECTIONS along the Hutchinson River.</li> <li>2. Increase RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES and locations for outdoor activity retail along the Hutchinson River.</li> <li>3. Make streets more inviting using street trees, better lighting, and IMPROVING THE SIDEWALKS.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. CLEAN THE RIVER and IMPROVE GREEN FACILITIES to include a boardwalk and pet facilities.</li> <li>2. Maintain INDUSTRY and build to invite new opportunities such as an entertainment barge for the Hutchinson River.</li> <li>3. Incorporate more SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT VENUES. Tie in athletics such as soccer and arts spaces for festivals and performances.</li> <li>4. Improve pedestrian traffic with BETTER SIDEWALKS and potentially limiting truck routes.</li> <li>5. Acknowledge the food sector in the BOA.</li> <li>6. Preserve and LEVERAGE HISTORIC LANDMARKS by creating a trail that connects these places.</li> <li>7. Provide a non-traditional event space.</li> <li>8. Take advantage of the sites that are not used after traditional work hours that occur in the industrial area.</li> </ol> |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emphasize HISTORICAL ASPECTS using maps, brochures and destination signage.</li> <li>2. Retain and enhance the INDUSTRIAL area character.</li> <li>3. Address access and egress concerns for automotive traffic while considering PEDESTRIAN SAFETY, signage and the roadway.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase access to RECREATIONAL AND ENTERTAINMENT opportunities.</li> <li>2. Maintain INDUSTRIAL and business opportunities over residential uses.</li> <li>3. Enhance public SAFETY and economic opportunity for 15-25 year olds.</li> </ol> |
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| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Create a RESTAURANT ROW like Chelsea Pier.</li> <li>2. Clean the canal to create a friendly RECREATIONAL water space.</li> <li>3. Establish more indoor RECREATIONAL opportunities.</li> <li>4. Build a competitive track and field facility.</li> <li>5. Incorporate a CULTURAL DISTRICT in Mount Vernon and implement local talent in designing unique wayfinding signage.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase access to RECREATIONAL AND ENTERTAINMENT opportunities.</li> <li>2. Maintain INDUSTRIAL and business opportunities over residential uses.</li> <li>3. Enhance public SAFETY and economic opportunity for 15-25 year olds.</li> </ol> |
|---|---|

participants to the base maps, and setting the ground rules. Maps were arranged around the room showing existing conditions and Initial findings to help frame the discussion, illustrate potential areas of opportunity, and inspire participants to consider what the Canal Village could incorporate in the future.

As the presentations came to a close, the consultants gave an explanation of the map drawing exercise called the “hands on working session” where the participants were asked to work together at the tables. Each table had a facilitator from the consultant team. The role of the facilitator was to help guide the conversation by asking questions to the participants and to make sure that everyone had a chance to contribute. The facilitators also had to make sure that the drawings and notes were organized by the end of the session.

## Hands-On Working Session

At the start, the participants gathered in groups of six to eight people at different tables to discuss their ideas for how to improve the Canal Village. Each table had maps and markers to help participants draw their ideas, “argue with your pencil”, and have fun while discussing various options.

Many different ideas were proposed at each table, however several themes emerged throughout the night. The people at many tables expressed their wish to increase the park space, particularly along the Hutchinson River. The river is seen as an important asset by the members of the community and many participants addressed this by suggesting more park space along the water in the industrial areas to include improved paths and bike facilities. Improving the streets and traffic in the area was another common point ranging from widening sidewalks, to including trees, to improved lighting. There was also general agreement among participants that more sports and arts opportunities should be provided, especially for youth such as skate parks, basketball courts, soccer fields, performing spaces and venues. It was also important to promote the historically significant buildings in the Canal Village and to help keep and maintain the major employers and existing industry.

At the conclusion of the working session, each table group presented a summary of their concepts to the larger group. Notes were taken on each presentation and the final illustrated maps were photographed for documentation.



Above: A representative from Table 5 presents ideas from her group.



Above: Representatives from Table 7 present ideas from their group.

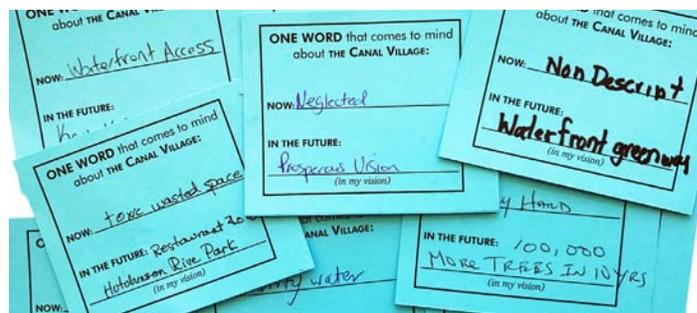
## One Word Exercise



Above: "One Word" word cloud from Canal Village Now

During the Workshop, participants were asked to complete a "One Word" exercise to summarize their impressions of the Canal Village project area as it currently exists, and how they envision that it might be in the future. These responses were collected and tabulated to discover common themes. This is visualized through the use of a "word cloud" that prioritizes more commonly used words. Key goals, concerns, challenges and opportunities and identified by highlighting certain aspects of the project area through this process.

Both word clouds below were generated from the "One Word" exercise from the Mount Vernon Canal Village Workshop #1. The graphic on the top of the page is a word cloud generated from words collected describing the participants' impressions of the Canal Village as it currently exists. The graphic below conveys the language used to describe the vision for the area in the future.



While there were good impressions about the current state of the Canal Village, many conveyed a less positive view, commenting on the polluted nature of the site. Nonetheless, the area was still also considered to have potential and many noted the character of some of the older existing buildings. Participants' vision of the Canal Village showed an interest in promoting the historic sites within the area while also incorporating more green space along the Hutchinson River. Keeping and growing existing businesses to include other services and opportunities was also important to participants.

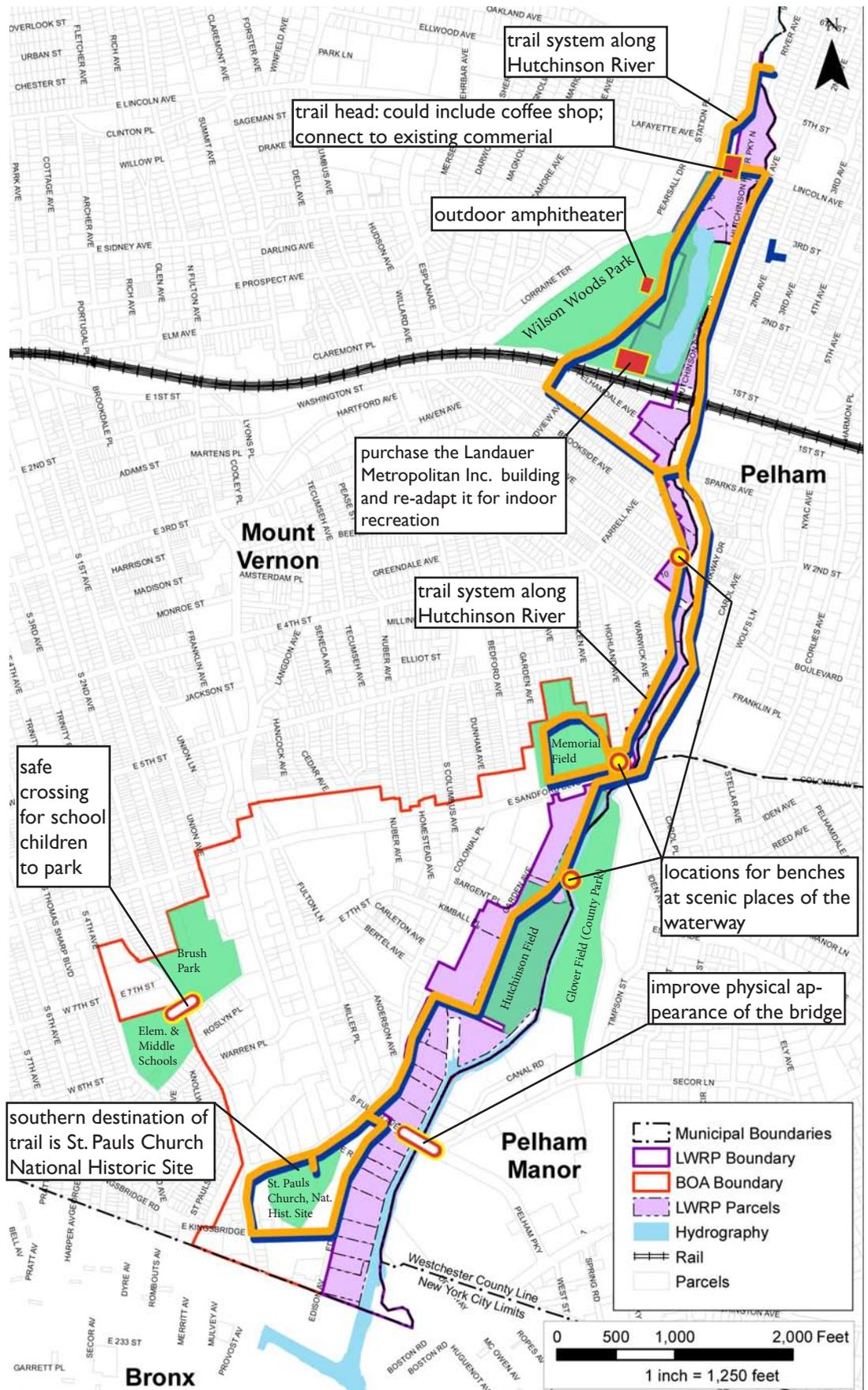


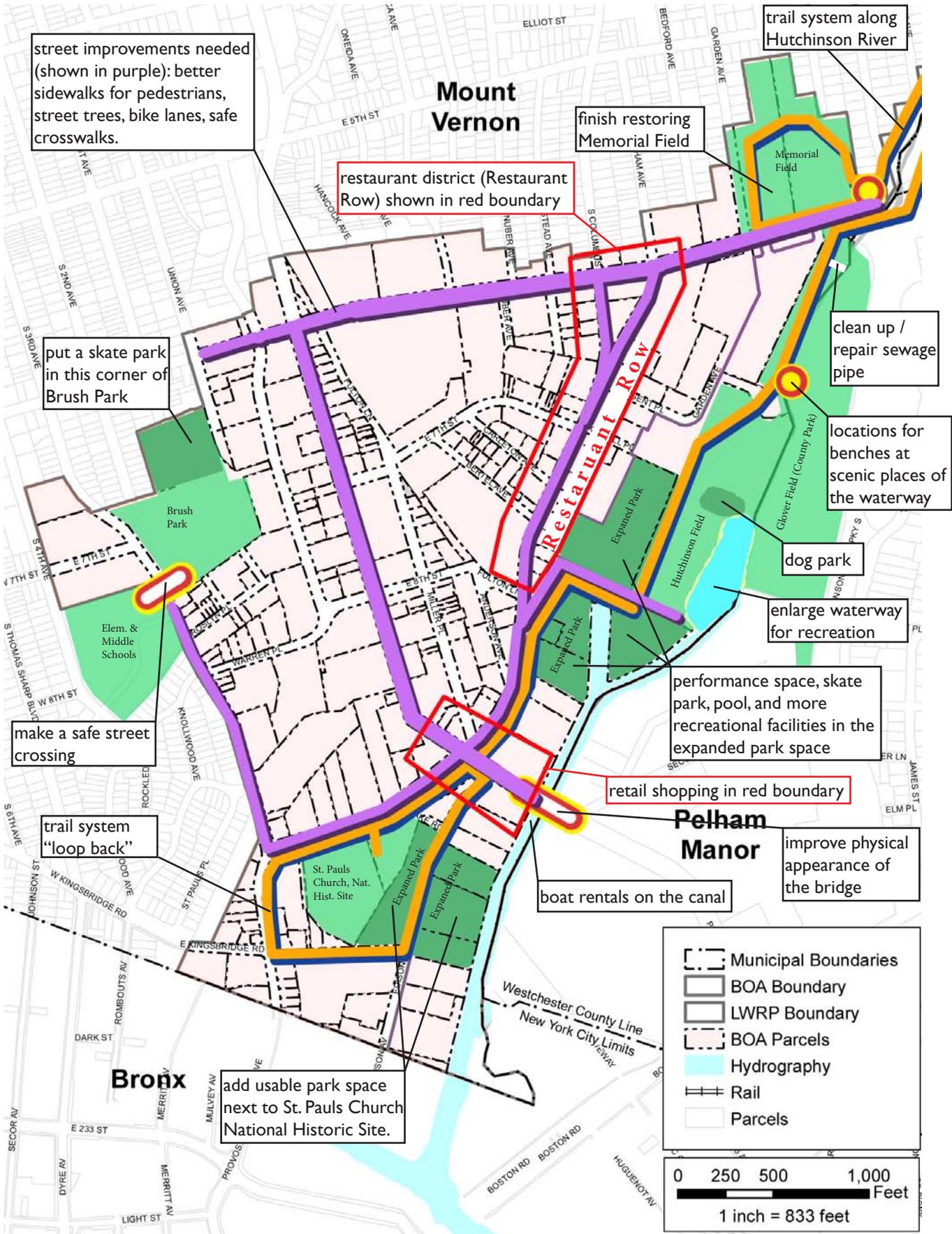
Above: "One Word" word cloud from Canal Village In The Future

## Participants' Maps

At the tables, each of the 7 groups had two maps: one that showed the entire Hutchinson River Waterfront within the LWRP project area, and a closer scale map of the BOA project area. The maps on this page and the next show a combination of all the ideas drawn on those two sets of maps by members of the community who participated in the workshop. So for example, if one group thought Sanford Blvd. needed street improvements and another thought Columbus Boulevard was in need of improvements, then both are shown on this map as needing improvements. If two tables both identified the same thing for the same location, then that idea is represented only once on the map.

It's best to view these maps as a neighborhood 'wish list.' At this early stage of the process, ideas represented here are not guaranteed to be implemented. Participants were asked to be creative and not to worry about how to implement their ideas. As part of this project, the consultants and the City will be looking into the viability of these ideas and identifying those that have a likely path for implementation. Goals and objectives will be established to help weigh any ideas that may be competing against each other.





# SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP #2

On Tuesday July 25, 2017 the second workshop for the Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization was held from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Benjamin Turner Middle School. The project team presented to a room of community members including key stakeholders, and city officials. Of those in attendance, a quarter were 70 or over, followed by those in their 40's. The majority of participants have resided, or worked in Mount Vernon for over 20 years (approximately 80%). Understanding this information, it is possible to determine that the feedback received is based on many years of observations as well as a vested interest from those seeking to remain in Mount Vernon.

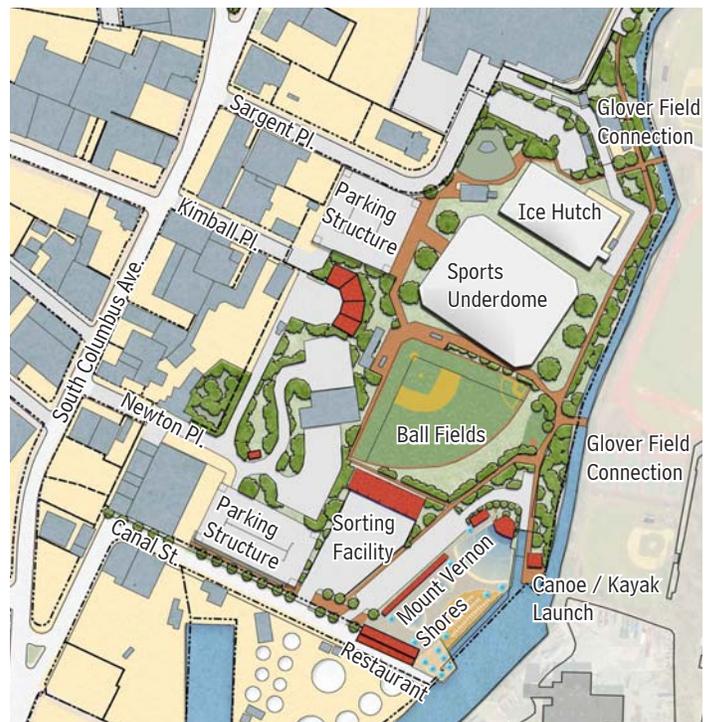
Joseph Kohl, a principal of Dover-Kohl and Partners, presented ideas and options to address community concerns and goals from the first workshop. The presentation began by reviewing the goals of the grants procured by the City of Mount Vernon as well as the time line for the completion of the LWRP Master Plan Report and the BOA Final Nomination. After this review, options of potential solutions to initial findings and community feedback from workshop #1 were presented. Participants were encouraged to provide thoughts and to ask questions during the presentation. The presentation also included polling questions for those in attendance to help refine an understanding of the participant's goals and priorities for the Canal Village neighborhood. The results of those polling questions are shown later in this chapter.

At the close of the presentation, the participants were invited to visit the display boards that were arranged by topics. Each "station" had markers for participants to draw and write comments and suggestions on the posted images. The topics included:

- Hutchinson Field
- Memorial Field
- Economics
- Transportation
- Environment
- Historic Preservation
- Hutchinson River Parkway Trails
- Illustrative Plan: Place Making

### *Community feedback:*

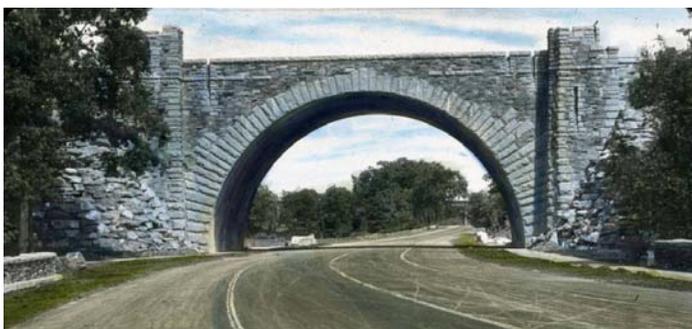
In addition to the active participation, the participants left behind "one word" cards and feedback forms that were distributed to all participants after the presentation.



An illustrative plan of Hutchinson Field



Restoring and Enhancing the existing Hutchinson River Parkway Trails



Pelham Arch: colorized photo from 1930's  
Note the paths under the arch on either side of the parkway.



Pelham Arch today  
A widening of the parkway removed the parkway trail, except for a narrow passage way between the concrete barrier and the bridge on the Mount Vernon side of the motorway (the left side of this photo).



Map of the Historic Hutchinson River Parkway Trail from the Atlas of Westchester County, Volume Two, 1930, Published by GM Hopkins Co. Philadelphia, pages 6, 7, and 10.

## Schematic Options

The following topics and ideas were presented by the consultant and are explained further in the pages that follow:

- *Recreation* – Improving the recreational amenities in the Canal Village
- *Sense of Place* – Creating a Sense of place with the design of streets and the positioning and height of buildings
- *Neighborhood Character* – improving the appearance of buildings within the Canal Village
- *Challenges and Future Potential* – strategies

### Recreation

#### Hutchinson Field

In Workshop #1, Hutchinson Field was identified by participants as in need of improvement, and Mayor Thomas presented a new vision for the park called *Mount Vernon Shores*. The consultants refined these ideas and presented the enhancements that included: the Mount Vernon Shores Water Park, improving ball park facilities, a recreational canoe / kayak launch, improved landscaping, and relocating the waste and recycling sorting facility. In addition to these improvements, parking structures, a reconfigured waste sorting facility, and a new pedestrian bridge to Glover Field were suggested.

#### Community feedback:

Participants were very interested in making use of aerobic recreational opportunities within Hutchinson Field with a majority identifying bicycle and running trails as a priority. Promoting Hutchinson River was also important as a kayak and canoe launch, along with water views were also sought after. This suggests that the recycling and refuse resorting should be relocated away from the river as identified in the proposed option.

#### Hutchinson River Parkway Trail

Feedback from Workshop #1 indicated the desire for more recreational space and the wish to revitalize the trail along the Hutchinson River. This trail is visible in maps of the area from the 1930's and have since become overgrown. They were never paved. The consultant team suggested that the trail could be widened and paved to accommodate bicycling and pedestrians. The improvements to this trail system would help to connect Mount Vernon with Pelham, increase pedestrian access to Memorial Field and Hutchinson Field, and provide more access to outdoor recreation to the residents of Mount Vernon.

Some challenges to achieving this trail were discussed. Parts of the trail have disappeared at bridges that span the Hutchinson River Parkway. These connections will need to be reformed in order to create a continuous and connected trail. In order to accommodate bikes, the trail would need to be made 10 to 12 feet wide for a two way cycle track. Creative solutions will be needed and investigated at locations such as at tunnels under the Hutchinson River Parkway. Currently, maintenance is an obstacle to the use of the trail. On-site observations have revealed that trails are overgrown and show evidence of litter and the accumulation of other refuse, and graffiti in places. Landscape maintenance of the trail, trash cleanup, restoration, safety, and lighting are all components needed to encourage use and contribute to a successful trail. This land is currently owned by Westchester County and New York State Department of Transportation (DOT), and cooperation will need to occur between the city, the County, and the New York DOT.

*Community feedback:*

All of the participants were in favor of restoring the old trail. Safety and comfort were two categories that were the most important to those in attendance, with the two most important features being paved pathways, and lighting. These were followed by benches, and emergency call boxes. Additional ideas that were discussed were including artwork in the trail, along with historic plaques, as well as the potential of a horse track.

**Memorial Field**

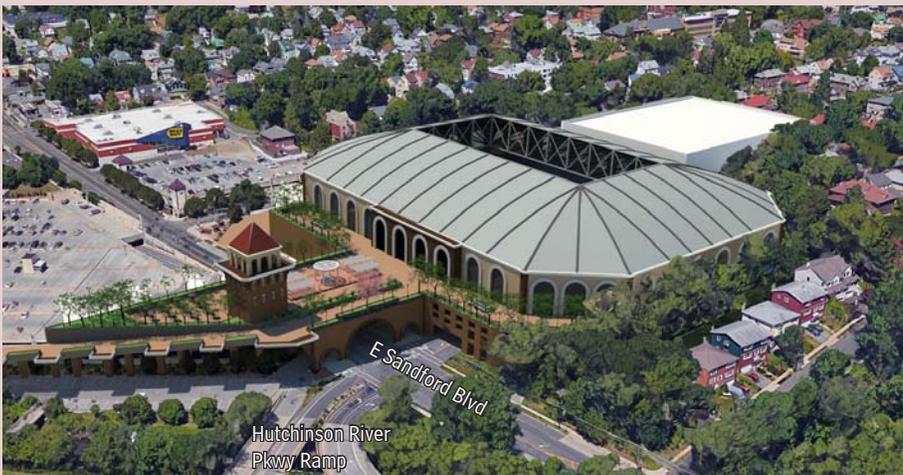
Participants of Workshop #1 communicated their want to have Memorial Field reopened and usable. Several options were considered and presented at Workshop #2 for commentary. Among those was Mayor Thomas' idea for an ambitious reconstruction that would accommodate a football field, a track, and approximately 20,000 seats.

Challenges to this solution included parking and creating a connection across East Sandford Boulevard. Mount Vernon zoning code does not mention parking requirements for sports venues so different ratios were examined - from 1 spot for every 4 seats, to 1 spot for every 10 seats, as well as options in between. Connecting across East Sandford Boulevard included creating a pedestrian plaza to bridge over the street, to creating crosswalks as a low-impact solution. The pedestrian plaza bridge could be lit on the underside to create a gateway into Mount Vernon.

*Community feedback:*

All of the participants were enthusiastic about revitalizing Memorial Field. There was some disagreement about how this should be done. Most of the participants suggested that the stadium be uncovered with more of an "outdoor" feel. Many suggested that the current scheme was too large and that a smaller stadium with a track was preferable to a large capacity stadium with a lot of parking. A few participants expressed enthusiasm for the large stadium with parking and the plaza spanning across and above East Sandford Boulevard.

*Sense of Place: Street Design &*



Options for Memorial Field

**Urban Form**

Feedback gathered at Workshop #1 indicated a desire for more green space, safer roads and sidewalks, walking paths, and providing locations for outdoor event space. The consultants identified four strategic intersections as places to focus efforts to illustrate the possible implementation of these goals. The purpose for creating a positive sense of place is that it can offer unique identification to more than one location within the Canal Village that will hopefully attract business patrons and to excite them to return often.

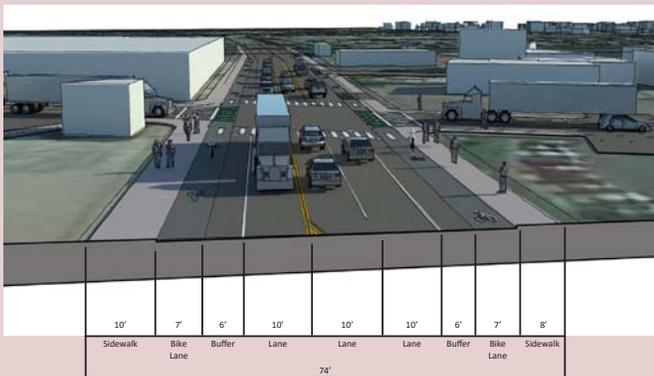
The consultants presented at least two options for each of the four intersections. The first scenario showed changes to the public streets with minimal anticipated changes to the private properties abutting those streets. These vary between the four intersections, but typically show wider sidewalks, street tree locations, bike facilities, on-street parking spaces, and narrower travel lanes. Currently trucks stop in front of establishments and block entire lanes to other traffic. The parking lane is anticipated to contain both striped parking spaces or designated loading areas, depending on specific locations and the needs of existing businesses. These first scenarios illustrate what can be

accomplished in the short term. The second or third options have more interventions that include variations to the facilities within the public streets, as well as implications for intensifying the private properties. These could be considered as longer-term changes. The changes to the private properties suggest that buildings are positioned closer to the sidewalks to support pedestrian-oriented streets and would likely be built taller.

Additional details in the scenarios include more street lighting to help improve the safety and walkability throughout the neighborhood. Also in some spots, the consultants illustrated reducing the thru-travel lanes from two lanes to one.

*Community feedback:*

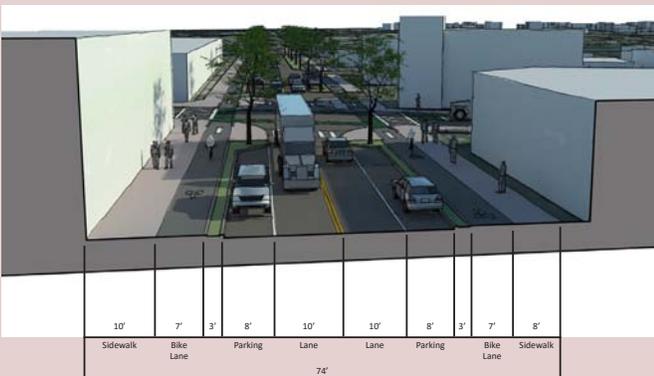
Most participants at this second workshop were very interested in the long-term possibility of accommodating bike lanes, if they were safe to navigate with truck traffic, as well as including more buildings along the street that could start to form squares with restaurant and commercial activity. However, most participants were also hesitant to embrace mixed-use buildings that included residential units, but were more accepting of offices above



Simple intervention street section at E. Sanford Blvd. & S. Fulton Ave.



Simple intervention at East Sanford Blvd. and South Fulton Ave.



Larger intervention street section at E. Sanford Blvd. & S. Fulton Ave.



Larger intervention at East Sanford Blvd. and South Fulton Ave.

commercial spaces. The top three street improvements that were identified by participants was to repair potholes, repair the sidewalks, and increase the lighting in the Canal Village neighborhood. Increased green spaces and street trees were also important to nearly all participants.

## *Character*

Maintaining the industrial character and preserving existing industrial businesses were themes from Workshop #1. In order to address this goal while also improving the Canal Village to be a pedestrian-friendly, industrial neighborhood several buildings were studied for modest, and simple improvements. These were presented to the participants of Workshop #2 as examples of how existing industrial buildings can maintain their character and use while also improving the neighborhood without having to be completely renovated, or demolished.

## *Community feedback:*

Many participants expressed interest in these improvements which included nicer canopies, including windows in areas that had been filled in, improved signage, planters, and installing lights with an industrial character. Some indicated their interest in this approach as a way to preserve the history and character of the Canal Village. Some business owners commented their concern for break-ins with more window space. This is a valid concern which can be resolved through the use of a resistant type of glazing, or installing a mesh style metal gate behind windows to be used during off-business hours.

## *Neighborhood Challenges and Potential*

An overwhelming majority of participants and business owners indicated that the single largest challenge in revitalizing the Canal Village is the aging infrastructure of the area. This ties into feedback about improving road and sidewalks. It also indicates that street improvements are a high priority for residents and workers in the neighborhood and may be near the top of the list of strategic interventions that are possible by the city.

Other suggestions that were communicated included ensuring that some of the additional green space includes family-friendly activities for children such as more playground space. Some participants suggested a small dog park, a permanent (or regular) food truck location, increasing code enforcement, as well as increased police presence in the area.



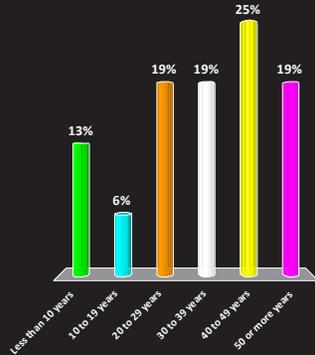
"Quick" Improvements were presented to illustrate relatively simple improvements that could be made to existing structures to promote the industrial character and existing industry of the Canal Village while contributing to the walkability of the neighborhood.

## Participant Polling Questions

During the presentation, participants were polled to gather thoughts and to establish priorities for the City of Mount Vernon and the Canal Village as the neighborhood evolves.

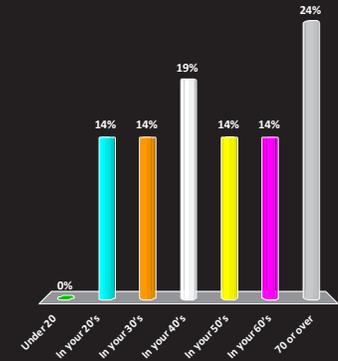
### How long have you lived or worked in Mt. Vernon?

1. Less than 10 years
2. 10 to 19 years
3. 20 to 29 years
4. 30 to 39 years
5. 40 to 49 years
6. 50 or more years



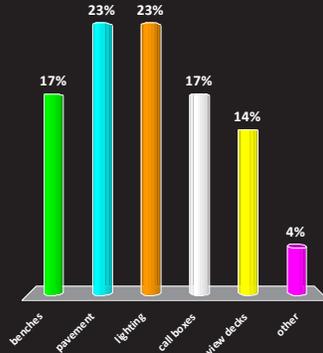
### What is your age?

1. Under 20
2. In your 20's
3. In your 30's
4. In your 40's
5. In your 50's
6. In your 60's
7. 70 or over



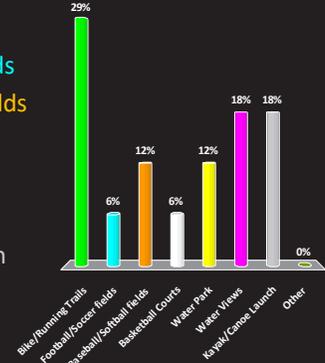
### Which features would you like to see incorporated in the Trail? (up to 6)

1. benches
2. pavement
3. lighting
4. call boxes
5. view decks
6. other



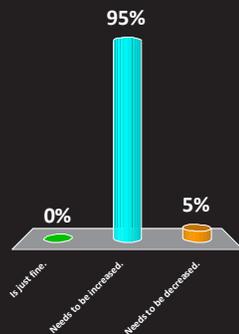
### Which of these features should be included in Hutchison Field?

1. Bike/Running Trails
2. Football/Soccer fields
3. Baseball/Softball fields
4. Basketball Courts
5. Water Park
6. Water Views
7. Kayak/Canoe Launch
8. Other



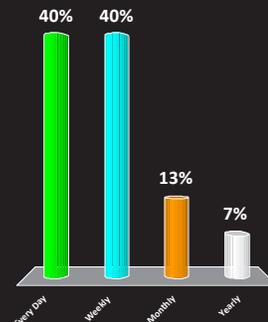
### The amount of green space...

1. Is just fine.
2. Needs to be increased.
3. Needs to be decreased.



### How often do you leave Mt Vernon for entertainment or recreation purposes?

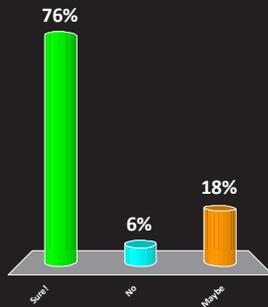
1. Every Day
2. Weekly
3. Monthly
4. Yearly



Participant Polling Questions

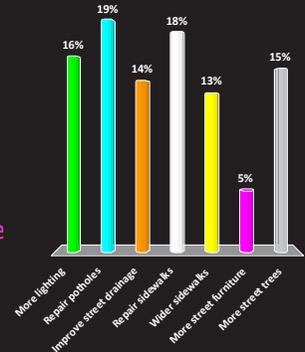
Would you enjoy riding a bike in the neighborhood if it felt safe to do so?

- 1. Sure!
- 2. No
- 3. Maybe



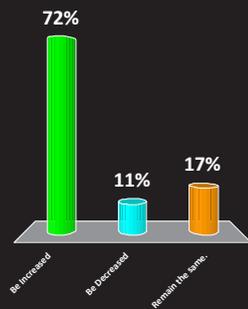
What improvements to the streets are most important to you? (up to 7)

- 1. More lighting
- 2. Repair potholes
- 3. Improve street drainage
- 4. Repair sidewalks
- 5. Wider sidewalks
- 6. More street furniture
- 7. More street trees



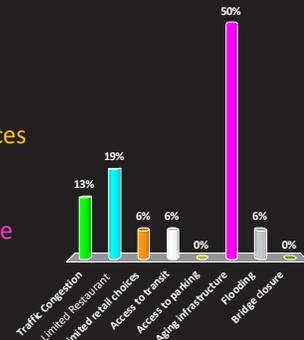
The number of street trees should...

- 1. Be Increased
- 2. Be Decreased
- 3. Remain the same.



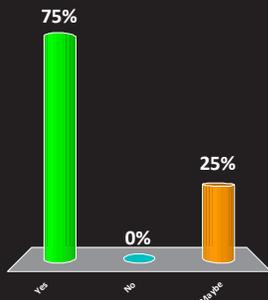
What is the biggest challenge to improving the Canal Village?

- 1. Traffic Congestion
- 2. Limited restaurant/food choices
- 3. Limited retail choices
- 4. Access to transit
- 5. Access to parking
- 6. Aging infrastructure
- 7. Flooding
- 8. Bridge closure



In general, are we on the right track?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Maybe



## Business Owners' Meeting

As part of the City of Mount Vernon's Canal Village Revitalization project, Dover, Kohl & Partners (DKP) and the Land Use Law Center (LULC) held a meeting with business and property owners from the Canal Village neighborhood on July 26, 2017 from 7:30 – 9:00 AM at Club 661 in the project area. Also in attendance were City staff and representatives from the project's Steering Committee. The meeting was a follow-up to the June 20th meetings with the same group to further discuss the project and the issues, concerns, and suggestions that business and property owners had for the area. The following bullet points are the notes recorded during the meeting, organized by issue.

### 1. Parking

- The amount and availability of parking locations and options is inadequate. There is no street parking and no municipal parking further exasperates this problem.
- Mount Vernon could consider establishing a parking authority to help establish and patrol parking meters in the neighborhood.
- The Department of Public Works (DPW) had considered relocating at one point, but decided against the move for reasons that were unknown to those in attendance. Relocating the DPW would open up open up potential parking locations. (DPW reserves almost all of the on-street parking spaces on Canal Street for their employees)
- The concept of shared parking was discussed, and most of those in attendance were not optimistic that it could be successfully achieved. Liability issues tend to prevent lot owners from wanting to do this. This has been tried before in other locations with a mix of success rates due to other businesses' concern with liability issues.

### 2. Loading Areas

- More loading areas which would increase value of properties. Adding loading areas would take away the already minimal street parking. A proper balance between transportation and parking solutions with loading solutions will need to be discussed.
- The one-way streets can be a problem when there are deliveries. These small streets tend to get backed up when large trucks arrive and park for deliveries and can prevent access to other businesses.

### 3. Improve the Pedestrian Realm

- Pedestrian issues, lights, sidewalks, and other similar strategies were discussed as important for the Canal Village neighborhood. It was mentioned that improvements in this area would increase neighborhood appeal.
- Trucks are going up on sidewalks when they turn into to their businesses, was identified as an issue. This action tends to destroy curbs and hurts the appeal of certain businesses. We need higher, or more durable curbs was discussed.

### 4. Improve Public Transit

- Business and property owners were more concerned with infrastructure and access, rather than a public amphitheater. Public transportation was discussed as an important element to the success of the neighborhood. The need to provide options for employees to arrive without cars was emphasized.



Roundtable discussions with business and property owners covered subjects from transportation through the site, maintaining industrial uses, and how to organize to strengthen the voices of the business and property owners of the neighborhood.

- Most employees are arriving in the neighborhood from Mt. Vernon and the Bronx. Incentivizing employees to use transit and ride bikes was discussed with an emphasis on reducing the number of private vehicles that enter the Canal Village.
- The possibility of more mass transit coordination between Mount Vernon, Westchester County and New York State was discussed.
- Business owners stated that the extension of the #5 New York City Subway line into the Canal Village was suggested as a great potential benefit to their businesses.
- Some employers suggested that they could give employees transit vouchers. This may be cheaper than negotiating a parking arrangement or accommodating parking on site.
- The existence of the #55 Bee-Line bus route in the neighborhood was discussed. Business owners suggested that there may not be use of the bus line due to limited options for parking at park-and-ride locations. One business owner suggested that the installation of parking meters, and the enforcement of them by the City, could help incentivize transit use. Improving bus stops to include shelters, along with improved sidewalk conditions were acknowledged as important factors to encourage transit use.

## 5. Maintain Industrial Uses

- Business owners conveyed the importance of maintaining small industrial businesses in the Canal Village.
- All business owners were interested in maintaining industrial uses and discouraging residential uses in the neighborhood, noting that industrial land is very rare the City and county.
- Business owners clarified that industrial uses mean not just warehouses, but the dirtier uses too. Owners pointed out that these uses need a place, otherwise there will be nowhere for them to operate.
- Business owners discussed the need to proceed with caution in making changes to the neighborhood due to the environmental risks associated with construction and site improvements.
- One business owner identified Hunt's Point as an example with a Remediation Action Plan (RAP) for the entire area, and not for a single parcel of

land. The possibility of that working as an option in the Canal Village was discussed. The benefit would be that when a site would be disturbed for any sort of change, one would know exactly what would be required for remediation.

## 6. Develop a Stronger Voice with the City

- Next steps for becoming a higher priority for Mount Vernon were discussed. It was noted that any organization would be more successful by providing incentives for action within the neighborhood. If the business owners could find alignments with city priorities, their efforts might be more successful.
- To help establish a group of business owners, the list of business owners who attended both owners' meetings would be circulated, along with the meeting minutes.
- Pace University agreed to follow up with more information regarding the 3-tier approach to organizing a business interest group. This approach could be: to start by forming an association, then create a legal not-for-profit, then work with the City to create a Business Improvement District. Creating this entity will require a strong commitment from property and business owners to contribute on-going time and funding.

## Subsequent Owners' Meetings

Since the time at the first meeting with the property owners, a group of has started to organize an association. They have held their own meetings and have begun meeting with the Mayor to voice their concerns and desires for the Canal Village neighborhood.

# SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP #3

On Thursday September 7, 2017 the third workshop for the Mount Vernon Canal Village Revitalization was held from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. at the Benjamin Turner Middle School. The goal for this meeting was to refine concepts that had been developed based on community feedback from the previous workshops. Workshop #3 consisted of a presentation, digital polling to gather feedback from the community, and presentation stations set up around the room. Members of the community including key stakeholders, and City officials attended this workshop to discuss goals, strategies, and desired visions for the community.

Joseph Kohl, a principal of Dover-Kohl and Partners, presented the culmination of the feedback from the first two workshops to address community concerns and goals. A review of the goals of the LWRP Master Plan Report, the BOA Final Nomination Report initiated the discussion. Developed concepts based on community feedback from the previous two workshops were then presented. These concepts included: goals, supporting goals, recreation concepts, sense of place (placemaking), parking, and community character. Throughout the presentation, members of the community were given the opportunity to give feedback on preferences and priorities on the developed vision for the Canal Village Neighborhood.

At the close of the presentation, the participants were invited to visit the display boards that were arranged by topics. Each “station” had markers for participants to draw and write comments and suggestions on the posted images.

## *Community feedback:*

In addition to the active participation, the participants left behind feedback forms that were distributed to all participants after the presentation. These forms provide another opportunity for the community to present thoughts, concerns, and other ideas for the vision of the future of the Canal Village Neighborhood.

## Concepts

During the course of Workshop #3 a variety of concepts were presented to the community for discussion and feedback. This section discusses these concepts and the information received.

- *Goals* — Objectives established based on feedback from previous workshops and site investigation
- *Recreation* — Improving the recreational amenities in the Canal Village
- *Sense of Place* — Creating a Sense of place with the design of streets and the positioning and height of buildings
- *Parking*
- *Neighborhood Character* — improving the appearance of buildings within the Canal Village
- *Additional Area for Study*



## Goals

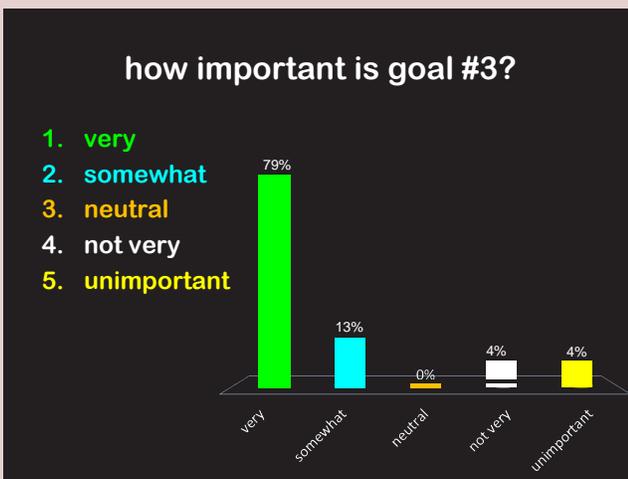
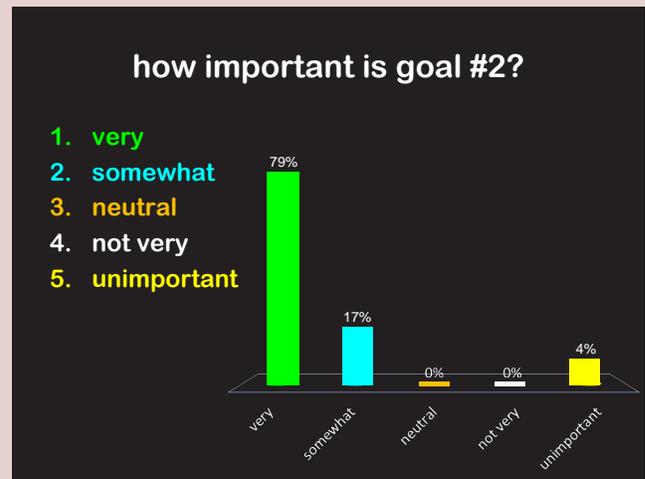
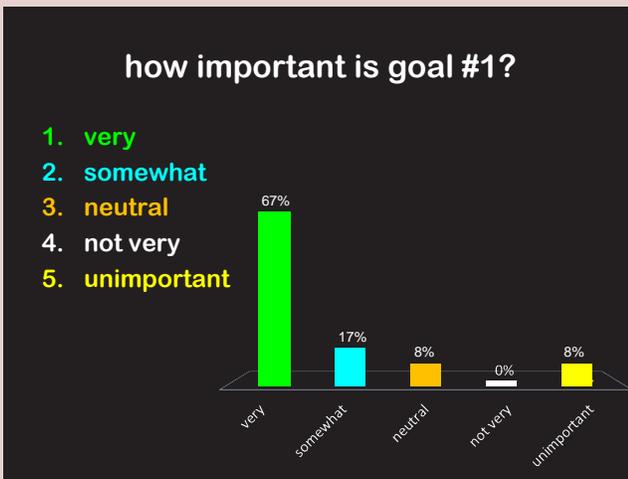
As a result of the previous public workshops and meetings with key stakeholders and government officials, a series of goals were established to address community concerns and achieve the vision for the Canal Village Neighborhood. These goals cover concerns ranging from economic concerns, environmental issues, to the built environment.

These goals are:

1. To increase the tax base for the city without driving away existing businesses – support local businesses to improve business.
2. Attract new businesses and reinvestment that can add new jobs with higher pay.
3. Make the Canal Village a destination for multiple activities: work, shopping, dining, recreating, and entertainment.
4. Improve the environmental health of the Hutchinson River and the Parkway as best as possible.

## Goal Feedback

During the presentation, participants were asked to rate the importance of each goal.



Additional supporting goals were created to achieve the four primary goals which include:

5. To improve the physical appearance of the neighborhood.
6. Make the neighborhood safe from crime.
7. Balance traffic congestion with the needs of local businesses.
8. Expand the recreational and entertainment opportunities by focusing improvements to the Hutchinson Field, Memorial Field, and the Hutchinson River Parkway while increasing public access to the Hutchinson River.

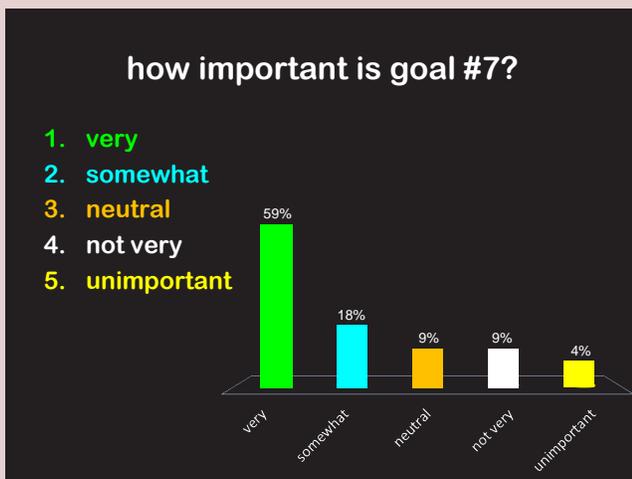
*Community feedback:*

During Workshop #3, community members were invited to indicate how important they thought each of the goals were. Each goal was seen as very important by participants to varying degrees. This feedback identifies which is seen as a higher priority for the neighborhood as Mount Vernon works to achieve these goals.

The top goal is Goal #4 — improve the environmental health of the Hutchinson River and the Parkway; and the top supporting goal is Goal #6 — make the neighborhood safe from crime. The goal the community considered the least important is Goal #7 — balance traffic congestion with the needs of local businesses.

All of the goals and supporting goals were considered to be “very important,” indicating that all of the goals are a high priority for the community.

### Supporting Goal Feedback



Recreation

Hutchinson River Parkway Trail

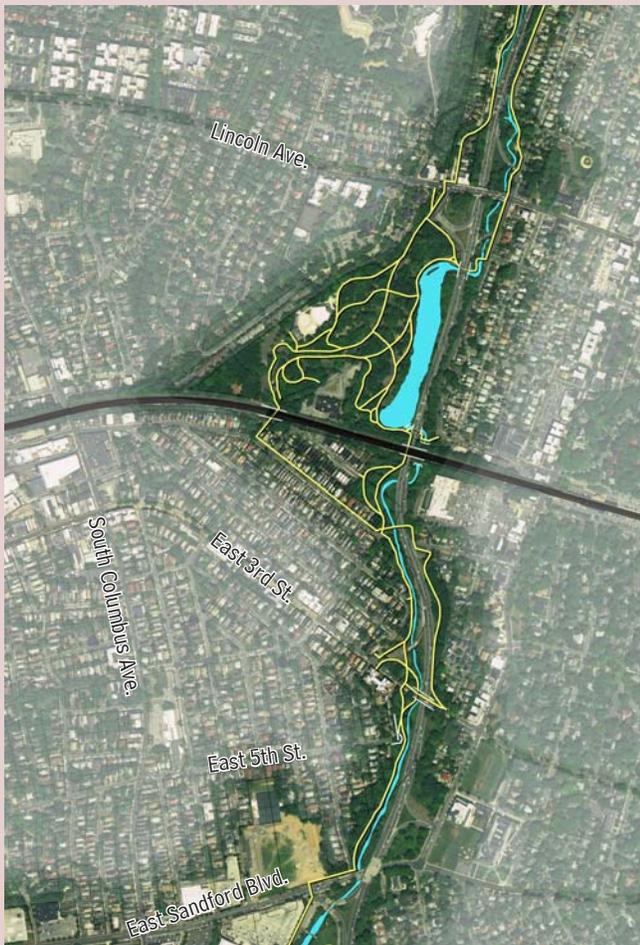
Further refinement on the design of the Hutchinson River Parkway Trail was conducted after Workshop #2. This refinement was presented to community members. Additional information was presented including conceptual sections to visualize how the Parkway Trail could be revitalized and improved for increased access for people and bicycle traffic.

Additional natural resources were discussed, and opportunities and challenges were presented to community members. These included improvements to the existing pedestrian bridge, and addressing invasive plant species

to the natural surroundings. Some of the action items to achieve these opportunities include: storm water runoff, water quality improvements, habitat enhancements, increasing public access to the waterfront, revitalization of underutilized and deteriorated areas, building Hutchinson River public awareness and stewardship.

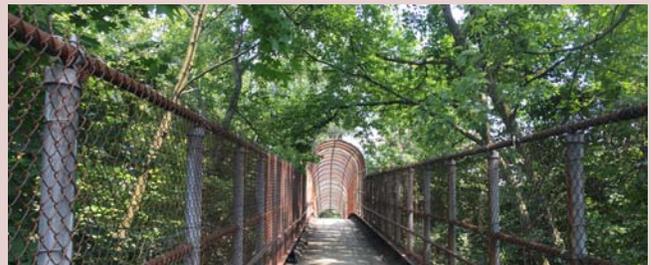
Community feedback:

Participants were very enthusiastic about revitalizing the Hutchinson River Parkway Trail and connecting residents to neighboring towns the Hutchinson River Park and Memorial Field. The health of the environment, especially around the Hutchinson River was a popular theme with participants, pollutant and biological pathogen levels were of concern.



Hutchinson River Parkway Trail

A plan to revitalize the existing Parkway Trail was presented to provide more connections to neighboring towns and recreational activities.



Opportunities and Challenges

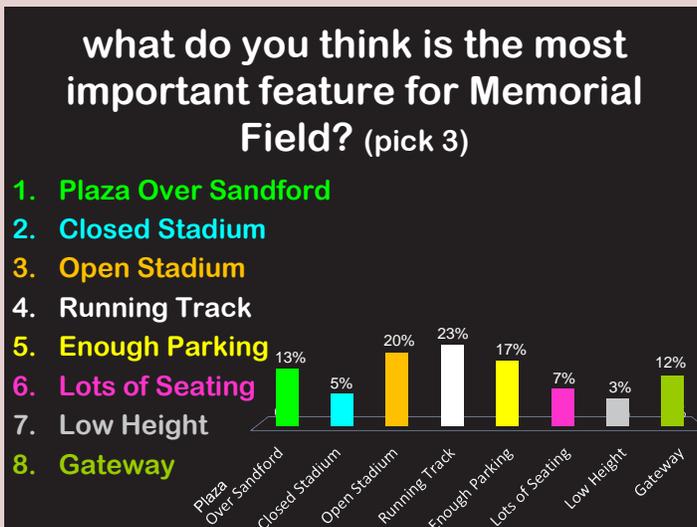
Environmental opportunities were presented as well as cleanup challenges to promote a healthy, local ecosystem.

**Memorial Field**

Feedback from Workshop #2 indicated that the community was interested in seeing additional development of the options for Memorial Field. As a result, the additional conceptual schemes were further refined and presented for additional discussion in Workshop #3. Discussion began with a description of the initial concept, including the use of LED lighting under a proposed pedestrian arch over Sanford Boulevard. This was followed up with a discussion of the three additional alternatives. These illustrations are included on this page and the next, along with community feedback.

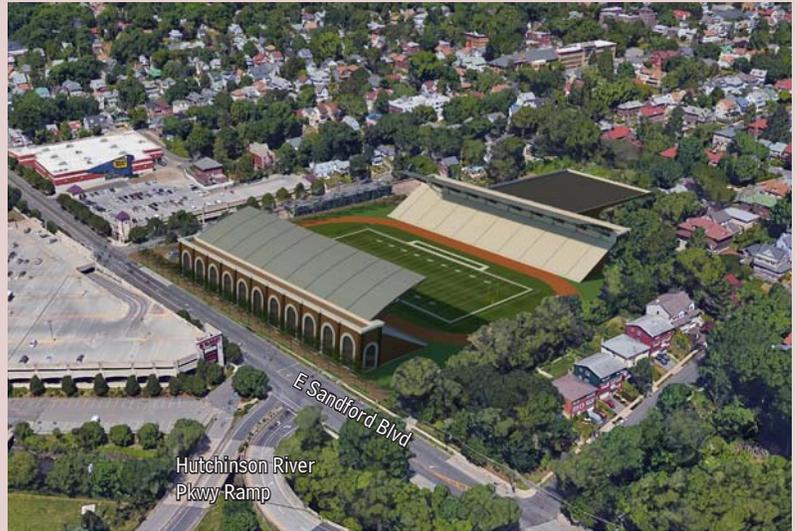
*Community feedback:*

Participants were still enthusiastic about the revitalization of Memorial Field. Participants expressed a desire for a football field and a running facility. The size and orientation of seating was discussed. The naming of the facility was a topic by participants who indicated that “Memorial Field” was the preferred name over “Memorial Stadium.”



Memorial Field

An illustration showing the plan and perspective view of Mayor Thomas’ Memorial Field concept was shown to participants. The community was also asked what elements they thought were important for Memorial Field.



Memorial Field Alternatives

Participants were shown three alternatives to memorial field. These alternatives illustrated different seating capacities, configurations, and parking requirements.

### Hutchinson Field

Participants expressed favorable opinions for the concept developed for Hutchinson Field which incorporated concepts from Mayor Thomas to establish a water park with improved recreational facilities called *Mount Vernon Shores*.

### Community feedback:

Participants continued to express support for improvements at Hutchinson Field. It was learned that the recycling facility was planned to relocate away from the site.



An illustrative plan of Hutchinson Field

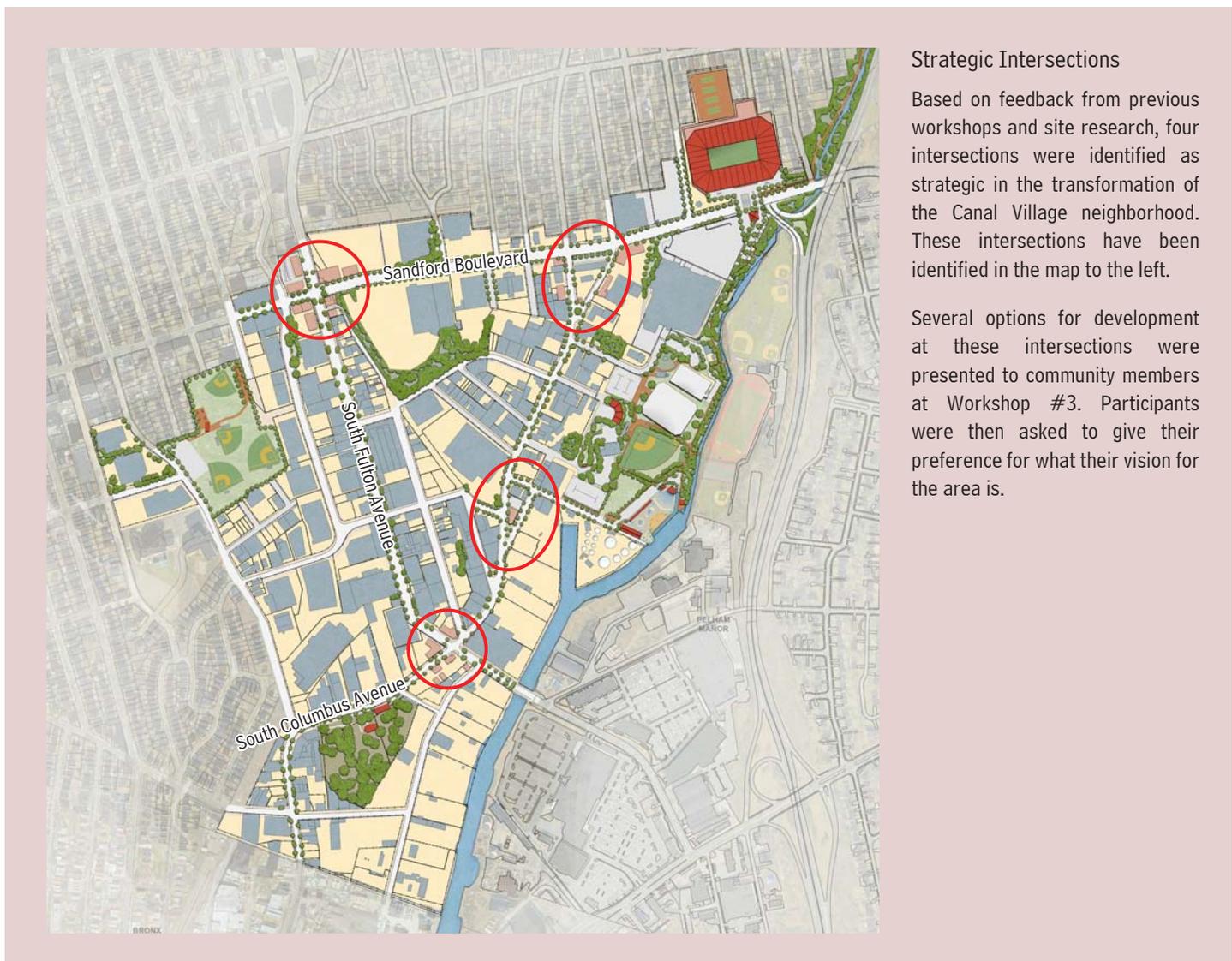
### Sense of Place: Street Design & Urban Form

In order to help the Canal Village neighborhood to improve its vitality, the community was invited to provide input and their opinions. Based on the previous workshops and background investigations, four strategic intersections were identified — Sandford Boulevard and South Columbus Avenue, South Columbus Avenue and Canal Street, South Columbus Avenue and South Fulton Avenue, and South Fulton Avenue and Sandford Boulevard. These intersections were developed into several schemes illustrating different intensities of development at each intersection, varying from street trees and wider sidewalks, to bike lanes and more building development with longer-term development. After each scheme was presented, the community was invited to indicate how bold the plan should be at each intersection. These schemes and the community responses are included in this section.

### Community feedback:

Most participants at Workshop #3 indicated a preference for a “Restaurant Row” concept and increased amounts of green space. Some debate occurred as to how to envision the future of commercial activity along Sandford Boulevard outside of “Restaurant Row.” This discussion centered around balancing how to achieve commercial success by strategically allowing apartments near businesses and concerns about density.

The consultant team indicated that increasing the height in strategic areas will help to encourage new development, increase tax revenue, and increase the chances of success for local commercial business.



### Strategic Intersections

Based on feedback from previous workshops and site research, four intersections were identified as strategic in the transformation of the Canal Village neighborhood. These intersections have been identified in the map to the left.

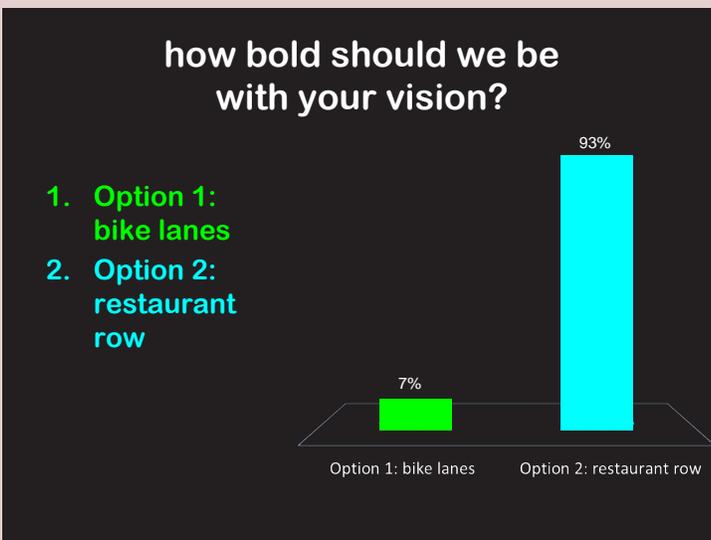
Several options for development at these intersections were presented to community members at Workshop #3. Participants were then asked to give their preference for what their vision for the area is.



Option: Bike Lanes



Option: Restaurant Row



### Sandford Boulevard & South Columbus Avenue

In Workshop #1, participants expressed a desire to see additional development at this intersection to establish the area as a destination. At Workshop #3 two alternatives were presented for community feedback.

Option #1 proposed less of an intervention with the installation of bike lanes and a small green. Option #2 proposed further development of the site with an emphasis on dining possibilities for residents and workers in the Canal Village.



Option: Street Trees

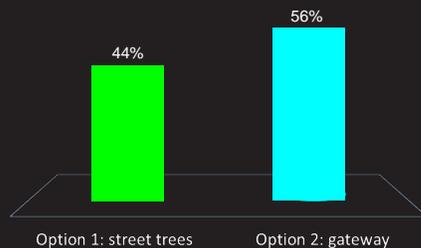


Option: Gateway



### how bold should we be with your vision?

- 1. Option 1: street trees
- 2. Option 2: gateway



### South Fulton Avenue & South Columbus Avenue

After the bridge at South Fulton Avenue is repaired and a road connection is reestablished with Pelham Manor to the east, this intersection will become the first view some visitors have upon entry to the city of Mount Vernon and the Canal Village neighborhood. In Workshop #3 two alternatives were presented to community members for their feedback.

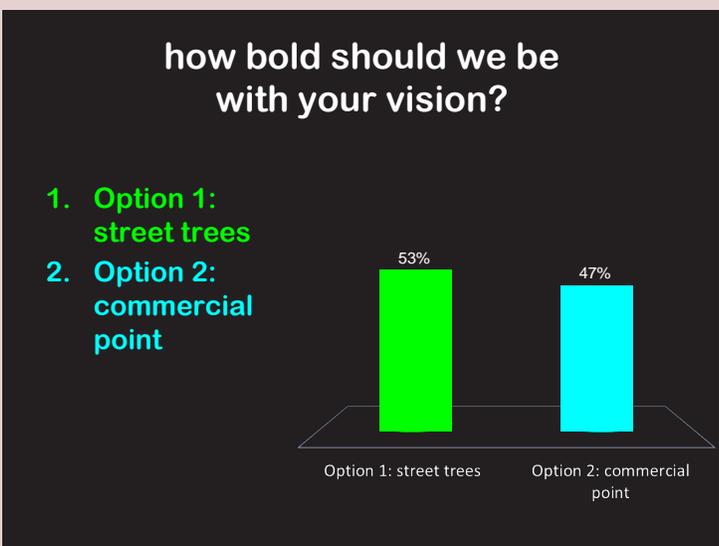
Option #1 proposed a small-scale intervention with wider sidewalks and bike lanes. Option #2 proposed Development on vacant areas and developing some buildings closer to the intersection as a way to create a gateway into the City.



Option: Street Trees



Option: Commercial Point



### Sandford Boulevard & South Fulton Avenue

After the South Fulton bridge reopens, the intersection of Sandford Boulevard and South Fulton Avenue has the potential to become an important intersection. In order to capitalize on this opportunity, two alternatives were presented to participants in Workshop #3.

Option #1 includes wider sidewalks in some areas, street trees, an extension of Fulton Lane to Sandford Boulevard, and additional traffic calming measures such as wider use of parallel parking. Option #2 proposes development of a Commercial Point along Sandford Boulevard with new commercial spaces, additional residences, and a small hotel to support the new commercial activity.



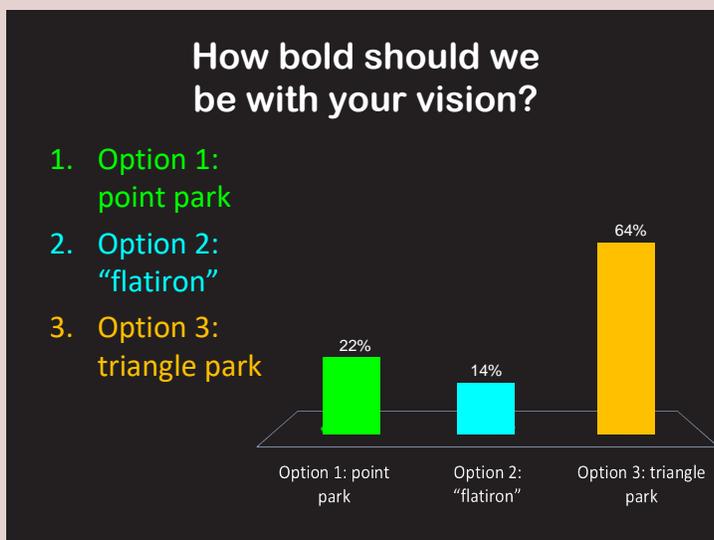
Option: Point Park



Option: "Flatiron"



Option: Triangle Park



### South Columbus Avenue & Canal Street

Feedback from business owners included a want to see better circulation at the intersection of South Columbus Avenue and Canal Street. At Workshop #3, three options were presented to community members for feedback.

Option #1 proposes turning the point of the intersection into a green space for workers and visitors. Option #2 proposes extending Canal Street, creating a "Flatiron" type of building and park at the point of the intersection. Option #3 proposes extending Canal Street and converting the area into a green space, to be used in conjunction with Hutchinson Park, for workers and visitors.

### *Parking*

Issues of adequate parking in the Canal Village neighborhood were brought up during Workshop #2 and especially at the Business Owners' meeting. Concentrations of parking concerns and potential locations were discussed during Workshop #3 to gather community input.

#### *Community feedback:*

Participants at Workshop #3 were receptive to solutions to parking concerns, however they were more interested in the types of places that the Canal Village could become.

### *Character*

Just as important to the urban design of a place is the quality of the buildings. Appropriately designed structures with the right type and level of detail can improve the impression of a neighborhood and encourage reinvestment and visitors. "Quick" adjustments to existing buildings that were presented in Workshop #2 for feedback were discussed again in Workshop #3 to confirm the feedback from the community. These adjustments include: reinstalling windows, placing planters to introduce more green in the area, installing nicer lighting designs, emphasizing the unique building detailing that already exists and installing canopies for shade.

#### *Community feedback:*

Many participants were in favor of seeing improvements of the sort illustrated in the Canal Village neighborhood. It was agreed that next steps would be determining how to encourage these pedestrian-friendly adjustments.

Property owners expressed a concern for "break-ins" which is why the windows have been closed up over time. Although more expensive, it is possible to install windows that are hard to break. They can be made with Lexan, or the same type of window used in hurricane prone areas.

### *Additional Area for Study*

Members of the community identified the Landauer Building in Wilson's Woods Park as an opportunity for the City to provide a public amenity. Participants expressed ideas to transform the now-defunct pharmaceutical office into an indoor communal recreational facility. Other ideas included transforming the use into a communal facility with a senior citizen center on upper floors. The height on a hill gives this building the potential to become a feature for the park and neighborhood.