

Sheridan-Hunts Point Land Use and Transportation Study Community Working Group Meeting – June 28th, 2011

On June 28, 2011 the Community Working Group (CWG) convened for the first time to meet one another, hear basic information about the study area, study goals, and timeline and to share ideas about the community's goals and needs. The meeting was well attended with the participation of representatives from several community organizations, local stakeholders, businesses, elected officials and City agencies. The Inter-Agency planning team present at the meeting included representatives from the Department of City Planning, the City Department of Transportation, the New York City Economic Development Corporation, the Department of Housing Preservation and Development, the Mayor's Office of Long-Term Planning and Sustainability, and the Office of the Deputy Mayor of Economic Development as well as the Department of Parks and Recreation and the State Department of Transportation.



The interagency team gave an overview of the study schedule, the community engagement process and background information about the area in the vicinity of the Sheridan Expressway.

Breakout Groups

To kick off the process of brainstorming and planning, the CWG members participated in breakout sessions during which they identified and shared their perspectives on the community's goals and needs. There were five breakout groups, each with approximately 10 participants. After the breakout session, meeting participants reconvened and a speaker from each of the breakout groups presented a summary of the breakout group discussion.

Breakout group conversations were vibrant and productive providing a platform for community stakeholders to begin sharing their perspectives and discussing strategies for achieving multiple benefits through the planning process and future development more broadly. A common theme in the discussion was the importance of the Hunts Point food markets as an integral, beneficial and desired part of the local community. Participants were keenly interested in figuring out ways to address the needs of the business community, like improved access to Hunts Point for trucks traveling to the Food Distribution Center and other business destinations on the peninsula; as well as those of the residential community, whose needs include improved environmental quality and pedestrian safety.

Following is a compilation of the goals and needs that were identified during these conversations. Land use, economic development and transportation issues were the main focus of the break out groups, but the discussion encompassed a full range of issues.

Land Use Goals and Needs

- Improve the quality of life for residents and businesses through increased access to open space and riverfront parks
- Protect the Bronx River and value it as a public amenity and environmental resource
- Protect existing affordable housing and build additional units
- Address growing community needs such as sanitation services (recycling & composting), health and human services, education and youth services, post office access and public safety when considering future development
- Minimize negative impact of concentrated industry and regional infrastructure, such as highways, on local environmental health
- Make environmental sustainability a core component of planning for new development



Economic Development Goals and Needs

- Create jobs, with a particular focus on increasing employment in the food industry

- Maintain and strengthen the Food Distribution Center in Hunts Point, and encourage the development of additional food related uses/businesses in the peninsula.
- Ensure continued economic growth in the South Bronx by improving access to safe, efficient and varied modes of transportation
- Improve community access to fresh, affordable food through partnership with Food Distribution Center businesses



Transportation Goals and Needs

- Improve truck access and travel time to and from the Hunts Point peninsula
- Identify alternative shipping methods (water or rail) to Hunts Point
- Consider the impact of changes to the Sheridan Expressway on the entire road network (both highways and local roads) and on access to existing and future community points of interest (e.g. Starlight Park)
- Mitigate impact of truck traffic on local neighborhoods and increase pedestrian safety
- Make neighborhoods less isolated through changes to the local road network
- Expand public transportation options to Hunts Point peninsula



Meeting conclusion

The meeting concluded with a question and answer session followed including a discussion of the public tours of the study site that are to be held this summer and the charrette planned for this September.

SEHP Study Program

- Community Working Group Meeting #1 June 28, 2011
- Scenario Development
 - Compile background data (Inter-Agency group) June to September 2011
 - Public Field Tours July 23, 2011
July 28, 2011
 - Community Working Group Meeting #2 September 1, 2011

- Public Charrette
October 15, 2011, 9:30 – 2:00, location TBD
- Compile and analyze data (Inter-agency group)
November 2011
- Community Working Group meeting #3
December 2011, date TBD
- Open Houses
January 2012, dates TBD