



City of Plainfield Master Plan

Community & Public Participation Summary for the October 22nd Plainfield Community Workshop



City of Plainfield Master Plan Public Participation Summary for the October 22nd Community Workshop

Prepared By:



architects + engineers
practical approach. creative results.

Workshop Date:
October 8, 2019

Prepared Date:
November 3, 2019



Community & Public Participation

Purpose

This Master Plan cannot be written, nor recommendations made without input from the people who live, work, and visit Plainfield. Without valuable public input, this document will not accurately represent the wants and needs of Plainfield residents. The Master Plan Team, Nishuane Group (*lead*), and H2M (*sub*), is working hard to obtain ideas, opinions, feedback, and concerns from the public throughout the year long Master Plan process using “high touch” to “high tech” approaches, ranging from traditional workshops to online engagement. This collaborative approach provides community insight on the future of Plainfield.

Community Workshops

The City of Plainfield and the Master Plan Team planned four community workshops throughout the project to gather information from residents.

The first public Community Workshop was held for 2nd Ward residents on Tuesday October 22, 2019 from 6pm to 8pm in the evening at the Cook School in the Cafetorium. Approximately 50 people attended the event.

The Master Plan Team and City of Plainfield is hosting several public Community Workshops in the months ahead to continue outreach efforts. These events include:

- 1st Ward - Thursday, November 14, 6-8pm: Emerson School
- 3rd Ward - Tuesday, December 3, 6-8pm: Washington School

Come to Community Workshops for the NEW Plainfield Master Plan!

“One Plainfield, One Future”

Find out more & take the survey!
www.PublicInput.com/Plainfield

The City of Plainfield is developing a new Master Plan, and we want to hear from you! Share your vision for the City's future land use, development, housing, transportation, sustainability, parks, and other important topics. In addition, there will be an urban planning for kids table, so no need for a babysitter!

Join us at any time between 6:00-8:00pm at one of the following workshops. There will be a brief presentation at the start of each workshop.

<u>October 8th</u>	<u>October 22nd</u>	<u>November 14th</u>	<u>December 3rd</u>
4 th Ward	2 nd Ward	1 st Ward	3 rd Ward
Clinton School 1302 W 4 th St	Cook School 739 Leland Ave	Emerson School 305 Emerson Ave	Washington School 427 Darrow Ave



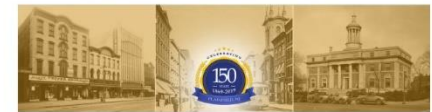
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The workshop began with an introduction from Bill Nierstedt from the City's Planning Department, followed by Gerard Haizel of the Nishuane Group, the consultant preparing the Master Plan and head organizer of the event. Jeff Janota and Nicole Venezia, planners from H2M, were also in attendance.

Upon sign-in, participants were given a Master Plan flyer and a Master Plan FAQ handout for the night's activities. While waiting to sign-in participants were asked to indicate where they lived in Plainfield. Participants were then directed by team members to gather near the projector for a short introductory presentation.

Center: Orientation to
night's activities
Right: Master Plan
FAQ handout



Welcome to the City of Plainfield's Master Plan Workshop!
The City is developing a new Master Plan to shape the physical, social, environmental, and economic future of the community. The updated Master Plan will provide a framework for preserving the City's character, supporting investment, and promoting desired changes.
We want to hear from you! Check out the project website at www.PlainfieldNJ.com/Planning to stay informed and take the survey. The feedback you provide tonight and through the survey will help guide the decisions for our community for the next 10 years!

Frequently Asked Questions

- What is a Master Plan?**
A Master Plan provides a guide for the future development of a community. It serves as a comprehensive approach to planning issues and considers many factors impacting a community's economic development needs.
The Master Plan gives the community the legal basis for control over future development, as well as land use planning policy and zoning changes. Most changes are implemented in the form of zoning amendments and land development ordinances.
- Why is the City doing a new Master Plan?**
The last time the City completed a new Master Plan was in 2009, and the state requires a municipality to undertake a new Master Plan or re-examine its existing Master Plan at least every 10 years. Since 2009, the way people live, travel, and do business has changed tremendously, and there is a significant amount of new investment through development and redevelopment being completed in the City. We need a new planning document to guide land use policies, development, and infrastructure improvements to respond to our current and future needs.
- What is covered by the new Master Plan?**
The new Master Plan will include the following elements: Goals and Objectives, Land Use, Circulation, Economic Development, Community Facilities, Conservation, Recreation and Open Space, Housing, Utilities, Sustainability, Historic Preservation, and Recycling.
In addition to the elements of the Master Plan, we are hosting a number of community engagement events where residents, business owners and other interested people have the opportunity to participate in the planning process.
- When will the report be completed?**
It is expected the Master Plan will be adopted by the Planning Board in the summer of 2020.
- How can I participate?**
You can provide valuable insight into the Master Plan by completing the survey questions on this webpage and participating at upcoming community workshop. And help spread the word by sharing on social media and telling your friends and family about what we are doing!



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During the introduction, Gerard Haizel (Nishuane) explained the Master Plan and the purposes of the night's workshop, to gain an understanding of Plainfield community issues through the eyes of residents.

Jeff Janota (H2M) then explained how the workshop would run and Nicole Venezia (H2M) explained the project's website, <http://www.PublicInput.com/Plainfield> and encouraged participants to take the online survey in their free time. H2M also pointed out that the workshop included a survey table with laptops for online survey taking. Four surveys were collected (hardcopy and online) during the course of the workshop.

Interactive Portion

This interactive part of the workshop required workshop participants to join in conversation with the "topic table" facilitators broken out into (1) **Land Use and Housing**, (2) **Transportation**, (3) **Economic Development and Community Facilities**, and (4) **Open Space/Parks, Sustainability, Recycling, and Utilities** to express their opinions, ideas, ask questions, and state their concerns. Each Topic Table was equipped with a handout for participants containing a 3-4 bulleted list of topics that could be discussed and a handful of guidance questions to help kickstart the brainstorming/interactive participation process. Each "topic table" was facilitated by a Master Plan Team member. A summary of issues resulting from the October 22nd workshop is listed on the following pages.





1. Land Use and Housing

LAND USE/HOUSING ①

- ~~NEED~~ LIKE LOW DENSITY Housing
- DENSITY AROUND TR STAT. 1/4 mile radius
- DENSITY BRINGING CONGESTION
- TRAFFIC INCREASING / NO PARKING
- TRANSPORT TO TRAIN STATION
- DESIRABLE BUSINESS AROUND STATION
- IMPROVE SIGNAGE
- OLD CAR DEA
- MORE HOME OWNERSHIP / LESS APARTMENTS

LAND USE/HOUSING ②

- APARTMENTS DOWNTOWN OVER CROWDED
- PLAINFIELD IS A DIVERSE COMMUNITY
- PARKING FACILITIES MUST LOOK MORE ATTRACTIVE
- NOT THE RIGHT MIX OF HOUSING TYPES TO ACCOMMODATE SENIORS & YOUTH
- EVERY CLASSROOM IN DISTRICT IS FULL
- *CONFLICT BETWEEN DEVELOPMENT & DEVELOPMENT
- WHICH COMES FIRST, RESIDENTS OR RETAIL/COMMERCIAL
- SENIOR POP - ACCESS TO HOUSING, COMMUNITY SERVICES

LAND USE/HOUSING ③

- LOCAL SENIOR CENTERS, RESIDENTS NOW SHUT OUT
- NEED FOR SENIOR PROGRAMS
- THERE IS A THIRTING SENIOR CTR IN THE CITY BUT INFO ON SENIOR POP NOT GETTING OUT ADEQUATELY
- MORE NEIGHBORHOOD BASED RETAIL/COMM
- DEVELOPMENT CONCENTRATED IN DOWNTOWN
- WHY WAWA IN MIDDLE OF TRANSIT AREA

LAND USE/HOUSING ④

- * MORE COMMUNITY INPUT IN PLANNING PROCESS
- IN NETHERWOOD AREA - 3 STORY LOW DENSITY VS 5-STORY
- SAME TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT ON SOUTH AV ACROSS TERRILL RD.
- DO WE DEVELOP ALL BUILDINGS WITH RESIDENTIAL BECAUSE THE RETAIL IS NOT BEING FILLED? OR DO WE BUILD RETAIL WITH OPEN FUTURE
- CUSHING HTS - COMMUNITY EVENTS OF NEIGHBORHOOD FEEL
- MOVING IN RIGHT DIRECTION

LAND USE/HOUSING ⑤

- NEED FOR NEWSLETTER OR OTHER COMMUNICATION VEHICLE TO DISSEMINATE INFO TO RESIDENTS, ESPECIALLY AROUND DEVELOPMENT

Land Use and Housing concerns include:

Vision

- Plainfield is a thriving community
- Moving in right direction

Land Use Concerns

- More neighborhood based retail/commercial
- Development concentrated in Downtown
- Density around Train Station 1/2-mile radius
- Desirable businesses around station
- *Conflict between development and development
- In Netherwood Area – 3-story low-density vs. 5-story
- Same type of development on South Ave. across Terrill Rd.
- Do we develop all buildings with residential because the retail is not

being filled? Or do we build retail with eye on future?

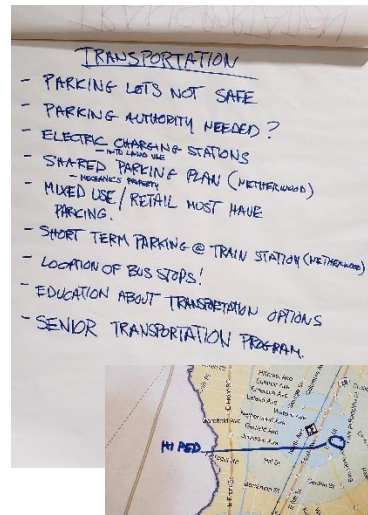
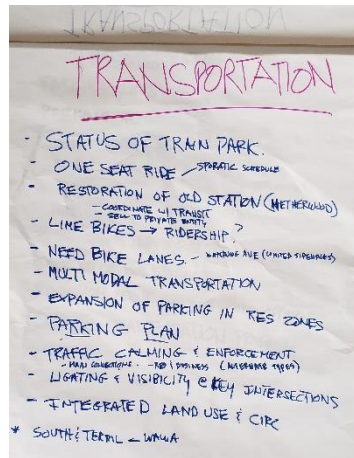
- Cushing Hts. Community events and neighborhood feel
- Why WAWA in middle of transit area?
- Old car DEA
- Improve signage

Housing Concerns

- Like Low Density Housing
- More home ownership / less apartments
- Apartments downtown over-crowded
- Density bringing congestion
- Not the right mix of housing types to accommodate seniors and youth
- Which comes first, residents or retail/commercial?



2. Transportation/Circulation



Transportation/Circulation concerns include:

Vehicle Needs

- Lighting and visibility at key intersections
- Electric charging (EV) stations
- Traffic calming and enforcement
 - Main connections
 - Residential and business (alterative types)
- *South Ave. and Terrill Road – WAWA

Parking Needs

- Expansion of parking in residential zones
- Parking Plan
- Parking lots not safe
- Parking authority needed?
- Mixed use/retail must have parking
- Traffic increasing/no parking makes retail difficult
- Short term parking at train station (Netherwood)
- Shared parking plan (Netherwood)
 - Mechanics Property

- Parking facilities must look more attractive

Transit Needs

- Location of bus stops!
- Status of train park
- One seat ride, sporadic schedule
- Restoration of old station (Netherwood)
 - Coordinate with Transit
 - Sell to private entity

Bike & Pedestrian Needs

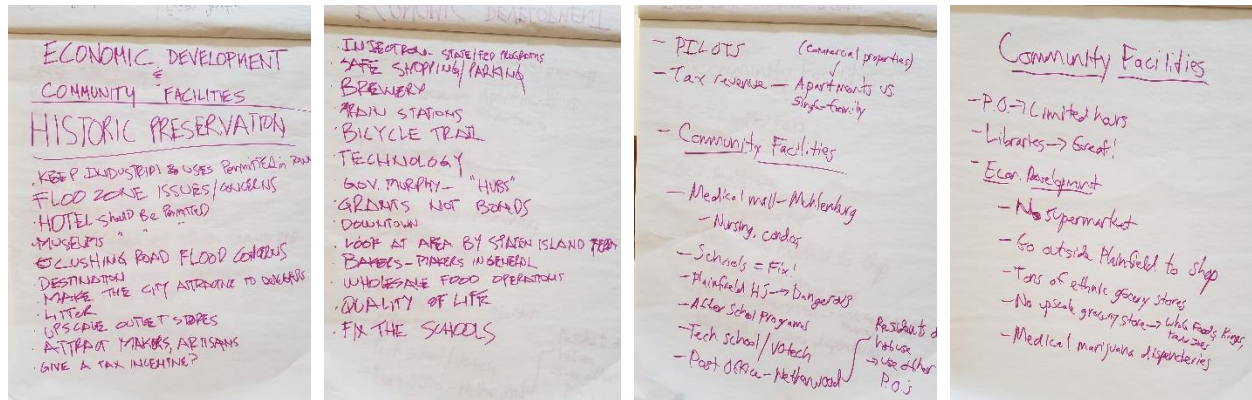
- Lime Bikes – ridership?
- Need bike lanes – Watchung Ave (united sidewalks)
- High pedestrian traffic at Belvidere Ave, E. 7th Street

Other

- Integrated land use and circulation
- Education about transproation options
- Multi modal transportation
- Senior transportation program



3. Economic Development & Community Facilities



Economic Development & Community Facility concerns include:

Economic Development Concerns

- Destination
 - Train Stations
 - Bicycle trail
 - Technology
 - Downtown
- Gov. Murphy – “Hubs”
- Grants not Bonds
- Give a tax incentive?
- Inject role – State/Fed Programs
- Pilots (Commercial Properties)
- Tax revenue – apartments vs. single-family
- Make the City attractive to developers
- There is no Supermarket
- Tons of ethnic grocery stores
- No upscale grocery stores – Whole Foods, Kings, Trader Joes
- Go outside Plainfield to shop
- Upscale outlet stores
- Safe Shopping/Parking
- Brewery
- Look at area by Staten Island Ferry
- Attract Makers, Artisans
- Bakers – Makers in general
- Wholesale Food operations
- Keep industrial uses permitted in City
- Hotel should be permitted
- Museums should be permitted
- Medical marijuana dispensaries

Community Facility Concerns

- Need for newsletter or other communication vehicle to disseminate information to residents, especially around development
- *More community input in planning process
- Quality of Life
- Need a Farmer’s Market, just the store
 - We have one next to city hall
- Medical mall – Muhlenburg Hospital, nursing, condos
- Fix the Schools
- Schools = Fix!
- Every classroom in district is FULL
- Plainfield HS – Dangerous
- After School Programs
- Tech School/Votech
- Senior population – access to housing, community centers
- Local senior centers. Residents now bussed out
- Need for senior programs
- There is a thriving senior center in the city, but info on senior population not getting out adequately
- Post Office – Netherwood - residents do not use, use other post offices
- Post office has limited hours



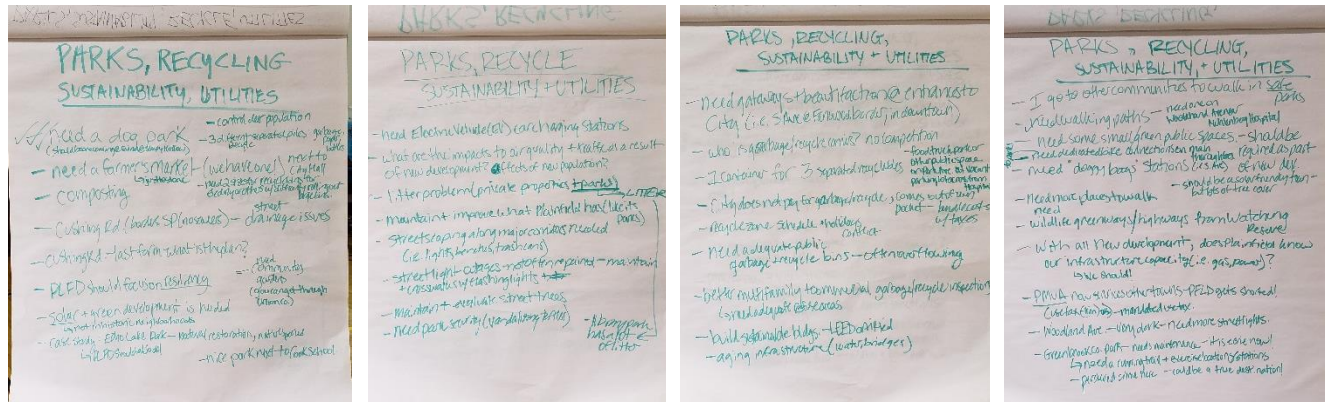
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- Libraries – Great!
- Litter
- Litter problem (Private properties and parks)
 - Litter, library park has a lot of litter
- Streetscaping along major corridors needed (i.e. lights, benches, trash cans)
- Street light outages – not often repaired, maintain and crosswalks with flashing lights
- Woodland Ave. – very dark, needs more streelights
- Need gateways and beautification at entrances to City (i.e. S. Ave. at Fanwood border, in downtown)



4. Open Space/Parks, Sustainability, Recycling, Utilities



Open Space/Park, Sustainability, Recycling and Utilities concerns include:

Open Space/Parks Concerns

- Cushing Rd. – last farm what is the plan?
- Maintain and evaluate street trees
- Need a dog park (should be one coming at Quinn and at Sleepy Hollow)
- Need “doggy bags” stations (i.e. S. Ave.)
- Maintain and improve what Plainfield has (like it's parks)
- Need community gardens (you can get through Union County)
- Need park security (vandalizing turtles)
- Food truck park or other public space on Park Ave. at vacant parking lot across from Hospital
- I go to other communities to walk in safe parks
- Need more places to walk
- Need walking paths - need one on Woodland Avenue near Muhlenberg Hospital
- Need some small/green public spaces - should be required as part of new development
- Need dedicated bike connections on main thoroughfares, connect to parks
- Nice park next to Cook School

- Greenbrook County Park
 - needs maintenance
 - it's eerie now!
 - needs a running trail and exercise locations/stations
 - perceived crime here
 - could be a true destination!
- Control deer population
- Need wildlife greenways/highways from Watchung Reserve

Sustainability Concerns

- What are the impacts to air quality and traffic as a result of new development? Effects of new population?
- Solar and green development is needed, not in historic neighborhoods
- Should be a solar friendly city, but lots of tree cover
- Case Study: Echo Lake Park – natural restoration, native species - Plainfield should also do!
- Need Electric Vehicle (EV) charging stations
- Build sustainable buildings – LEED certified

Recycling Concerns

- Need adequate public garbage and recycle bins – often over flowing
- Who is garbage/recycle carriers? No competition



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- PMUA now services other towns – Plainfield gets shorted! (use tax lein) – mandated use tax
- City does not pay for garbage/recycle; comes out of own pocket – bundle costs with taxes
- 3 different specific separated piles: garbage, paper, bottles
- 1 container for 3 separated recycleables
- Need 2 sizes for recycle cans for elderly or others with difficulty rolling ot large bins
- Recycle zone schedule and holidays conflict
- Better multifamily and commercial garbage/recycle inspections

- Need adequate refuse areas

- Composting

Utilities Concerns

- Plainfield should focus on resiliency
- Flood zone issues/concerns
- Cushing Rd. (borders Scotch Plains (no sewers) – Street drainage issues
- Cushing Road Flood concerns
- Aging infrastructure (water, bridges)
- With all new development, does Plainfield know our infrastructure capacity (i.e. gas, power)?
 - We should!