

# TOWN OF CLARKSTOWN & ROCKLAND COUNTY NEW CITY HAMLET CENTER VISION PLAN

## **Kick-off Meeting and Community Workshop** **Workshop Notes – Room #165**

*Clarkstown North High School*  
*March 1<sup>st</sup> 2006 7:00 pm*

### **Likes**

- Quiet with small unique stores
- Can walk from home to downtown
- Existing architectural gems
- Route 304 – good bypass
- Opportunities
- Can have a sense of community
- Not a major intersection
- County seat
- Excellent convenience (under used)
- Connect Dutch Gardens with Demarest Park (lots of resources)
- Small town feel

### **Dislikes**

- Empty lots and buildings
- Congestion (growing)
- Poor mix of businesses
- Architectural ‘hodge podge’
- No identity
- Lack of maintenance (depressed looking)
- Run down
- Not pedestrian friendly (too many curb cuts)
- Lack of enforcement

### **Opportunities**

- Rehabilitation of structures
- Façade improvements
- Protect open areas (Green Burgh Rapkin property)
- Incentive program (design theme)
- Pilot project (Landau Park/Dutch Gardens) (shopping center)
- Adequate infrastructure
- More access to Dutch Gardens
- Maintain residential character
- Focus/create county center
- Deck parking lot behind county courthouse

## **Barriers**

- Need plans
- Inadequate roads
- Lack of community – unity and politics
- Political follow through and commitment
- Apathy – bedroom community
- Inconsistent review boards are slowing down plans (lack of communication)
- Financing and tax burden
- Need more county funding (excluded from certain funding because of income)

## **Workshop Notes – Room #166**

## **Likes**

- Schools
- Parks – gems
- Demarest
- Dutch Gardens
- CVS – new construction
- Downtown and residential – definable
- Home improvement – use/change
- Parks – Kennedy
- Safe
- Services – movies, shops, cafes
- Has everything
- Citizens are trying
- Gems
  - Courthouse
  - Firehouse
  - Police station
  - St. Augustans
  - La Terraza
- Access
- Mature street tree

## **Opportunities**

- New Hempstead Road
  - Boulevard
  - Connection to 304
  - “Central Park”
- Public Transit
  - Bus service
  - Improved terminals
  - Continuous/consolidate
- Opportunities for kids
  - Community Center

- Fields
- Movies

### **Dislikes**

- Lack of continuity in architecture
- Lack of variety in shopping - specialty stores
- “Bradleys”
- North Main Street
- Traffic on side streets
  - Speed
  - Better flow on Main Street
  - Center turning lane
- Schools
- Need more food stores or supermarkets
- Strip malls – New Hempstead parking
- Lack of Walkability
- Parking – lack of parking on Main Street and in general
- Is walking going to work?
- Cars more important than people/lack of correct streetscape
  - General condition
  - No incentive
  - Lack of maintenance No enforcement

### **Barriers**

- Difficulties with private business
- Strip Malls – zoning

### **Opportunities**

- Image – Dutch Gardens (need of)
- Façade improvement
- Retain open space
- Variety

### **Vision statement**

- Pedestrian friendly
- Creates pride

### **Summary Sheet**

#### **Likes**

- Parks
- Safety
- Schools
- Beginning of change

### **Dislikes**

- Strip malls
- Traffic problems
- General look of Main Street
- Maintenance
- Code Enforcement

### **Opportunities**

- Connection of North Hempstead with 304
- Opportunities for kids
- New Hempstead to Boulevard
- Mixed use

### **Barriers**

- Difficult with private business
- Strip malls (again)
- Lack of image

## **Workshop Notes – Room #167**

### **Likes**

- Convenient
- Friendly “mom & pop” shops
- Specialness – County seat
- Open space
- Historical features
- Maple Avenue – small town feel, quaint, greenery
- Northern view – mountains

### **Dislikes**

- Speed of traffic
- No continuity
- No parking – limits use of businesses
- Not pedestrian friendly – dangerous
- Sidewalks broken – no handicap accessibility
- Ugly shopping centers with lots in front
- Dutch Gardens neglected
- Lack of traffic flow in certain areas
- No greenery, weeds – streets not maintained
- Garbage/glass on streets
- Not pretty (like Ridgewood, Nyack)
- No character, no identity
- Overhead wires/poles
- No architectural standards
- Businesses not diverse

- Not kid friendly – no place for them to gather

## **Barriers**

- Funding
- Too many of same businesses (nail salon, etc.)
- Too many strip malls
- Consensus of all stakeholders (civic and government)
- Apathy (business owners)
- Infrastructure difficult to change/implementation

## **Opportunities**

- Soft, elegant lighting on streetscape
- More landscaping – planters, more “countrified” (8 votes)
- Cleanup courthouse structure – lightscaping
- Celebrate New City history – tie into historical uniqueness
- Charming sculptures benches in streets and parks
- “Planned community”
- Eliminate telephone poles above ground
- Code of aesthetics
  - Facades
  - Landscaping
  - Architecture
- Outdoor dining, gathering places, public spaces
- Fountains
- Free trolley – environmentally conscious
- More upscale restaurants and businesses
- More diversified businesses
- Want New City to be a destination
- Reconfigure streets and get rid of “suicide lane”

## **Priorities**

- Streetscape/code of aesthetics
- Business development
- Sense of place
  - Community
  - History
- Funding
- Difficult to alter infrastructure
- Consensus

## Workshop Notes – Room #170

### Likes

- Congenial
- Highly trafficked
- Used by people of the community
- Small scale
- Can walk to most businesses
- Grid formation is convenient (downtown area)
- Nice mix
- Landscape – old pine trees, Dutch Gardens, green spaces, courthouse lawn
- Streetscape of Maple Avenue and Park Avenue
- Open space
- Demarest Kill Park
  - Kennedy Dells
  - Local ownership of businesses
- Multi-land use properties

### Dislikes

- Lack of condition of streets and sidewalks
  - Uncontrolled signage
  - Stores - no uniformity
- Congers Road/Route 304 intersection is not appealing
  - No character
  - Need real design – not all uniform design (Federal Georgian)
  - Lack of character
- Traffic jam – difficult to make left turns
- Parking in strip malls – move parking behind building
- Pedestrian traffic – no crosswalks (Provident Bank)
- Parking
  - Municipal parking needed
  - Current parking is insufficient
- Too many malls
- Have shuttle between North and South Main Street
- Need car to run errands
- No place for teenagers in town
- No playground
- Cluttered – no pleasant
- Utility poles exposed
- No walkways or bike paths for access down New Hempstead Road

### Barriers

- Show pictures/incentives to inspire people
- Strip malls exist now
- Property owners resist change

- Will need improvements along Route 304
- Enforcement of zoning or other issues

### **Opportunities**

- 21<sup>st</sup> Century design approach
- Pearl River, Nyack, Suffern and Congers
- Small town look – inviting to people
- Street lighting
- Underlying architectural character here
  - Get architects that understand the community's desire
- Maintain open/green space
- Incorporate the history into the town
- More family friendly – sidewalks/parking
- Keep traffic moving by having parking in specific areas
- Add water features
- Financial opportunities to building owners as incentive
- Affordable senior citizen housing close to town
- Housing for volunteers

### **Workshop Notes – Room #171**

### **Likes**

- Courthouse
- History
- Religious Instruction
- Library
- Conveniences/Services
  - Parks
  - Restaurants
  - Movie Theater
  - Grocery People
  - Medical services
  - Proximity to NYC
  - Proximity to Palisades Center
  - Historical Society
  - Recreation – Zukor Park
  - Kennedy Dells
  - Valleys
  - Level Area

### **Dislikes**

- Not pedestrian friendly
- Not bike friendly
- Incongruous setbacks
- Lack of sidewalks – New Hempstead
- Aesthetically discombobulated

- Utility poles/lines
- Parking location
- Litter
- Traffic – slow/hazardous conditions
  - Lanes designed
- Access – multiple points of entry
  - Confusing
- Devoid of charm and culture
- No entry
- No vegetation/trees

### **Opportunities**

- Pedestrian Mall
  - Burlington, VT
  - Ithaca, NY
  - Ridgewood, NJ
  - South Street Seaport
  - Santa Monica, CA
- Shopping Centers (Bradley's, etc.)
- Town center/traffic – reconfiguration
- Landscaping on North Main Street
- Dutchess Gardens – open area of Annie's Nails to access
- Traffic circulation
- One-way – Main Street and Maple
- Walk/bike trail
- Route 304

### **Barriers**

- Sheriff's control of traffic
- Store location
- Living new business
- "Too many cooks"
- Traffic flow on New Hempstead
  - Splitting North and South Main Streets/New City
  - Redirect traffic
- Land of Connections
- Coordination of redevelopment
- Money Mall

### **Summary Sheet**

#### **Likes**

- Conveniences
- Services
- Restaurants
- Movie theaters

## **Dislikes**

- Not pedestrian friendly
- Traffic – slow/hazardous/design

## **Opportunities**

- Pedestrian mall
- Traffic circulation
- Town center
- Protect open spaces (Dutch Gardens)
- Maintain residential character of surrounding neighborhood
- Connection – New Hempstead Road
- Opportunity for kids in core
- Hempstead into boulevard
- Mixed use development
- Streetscape aesthetics
- BD
- Sense of place – what makes New City special
- Take advantage of all character
- Family friendly
- Open space
- Connect North and South Main Street
- Remodel traffic flows and patterns
- Appropriate business redevelopment

## **Barriers**

- “Too many cooks”
- New Hempstead Road traffic
- Lack of connections

## **Workshop Notes – Room #172**

### **Likes**

- Courthouse
- Dutch Garden
- Landau Park
- Diverse within limited geographic area
- Small area
- Only movie theater (besides mall) on eastern part of County
- See mountains in backdrop
- Demarest Kill
- People have to “come here” – have a draw (due to County seat)
- 2 supermarkets
- Historic Society
- Landscaping of few businesses (i.e. La Terraza)
- Library

## **Dislikes**

- Traffic – suicide lanes
- Lack of parking
- Sidewalks (lack of/poor condition)
- Too many curb cuts
- All parking in front of stores – ugly
- Visually choppy – no continuity of architecture
- Almost all commercial buildings – ugly
- No residences above stores – need more residences in town
- New City gardens – ugly
- Too many gas stations
- Gas stations without design/planning
- Courthouse – missed opportunity – parking/fences in front
- Need more landscaping in front of courthouse
- Parking/access to courthouse in rear
- New Hempstead – parking in front yards/temp. buildings remain (Old County Clerk Boulevard)
- No general parking for shoppers
- Parking for courthouse insufficient
- New Hempstead/Main Street intersection – very ugly – too much pavement
- Sain Building – too close to road – ugly
- Rents too high – businesses people need on a dial basis – not able to survive
- View from New Hempstead (gateway) visually unpleasant
- No defined entrance to south
- All entrances to New City fail visually
- Not safe to walk, so no one does

## **Opportunities**

- Maple Avenue to become part of town dimensionally
- Take county historical artifacts/statues and highlight in county seat area
- Lawn of courthouse – under utilized – have outdoor concerts, gazebo, fountain
- Open up front of Dutch Garden to provide access
- Purchase land in front – make a designation with historic marker
- Provide public transportation to northern end
- Incorporate library, post office, historical society into plan (bring them back into town)
- Upgrade level of retail – type, quality
- Clarkstown Mall cleaned up – limit curb cuts, clean up façade
- Put utilities underground
- First time county has participated and may be more vested to do continual maintenance

## Workshop Notes – Room #192

### Likes

- Natural and historic features
- Demarest Kill Restoration
- Road system
- County Courthouse

### Dislikes

- Strip malls
- Lack of parking/access
- “Hodge podge” layout
- No community sense
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Signage
- Highway mentality
- Excess pavement
- Lack of landscape
- Lack of business plan
- Slow traffic on Main Street
- Remove unnecessary traffic

### Barriers

- No incentives
- Afraid of change
- Must look at area - not just main street
- No destinations
- Traffic too fast – must slow
- Lack of property to improve streetscape
- Create pedestrian mall on South Main Street

### Opportunities

- Expand South Main Street look
- Redirect Main Street traffic to 304
- Traffic calming – slow traffic
- Lack of appropriate business redevelopment
- Changing traffic patterns
- Plantings/landscaping
- Development guidelines
- Create town center gathering area
- Improve landscaping and lighting
- Interaction between government and business owners – zoning changes
- Create civic center/cultural center
- Connect parks – Dutch Garden, Demarest Kill Park