

Yonkers Community Forum
Struever Fidelco Cappelli LLC
May 20th, 2006

The following is a synopsis of the discussion points raised by the public at the May 20, 2006 Community Forum, held at the Yonkers Public Library.

After an introduction by Joe Apicella of Cappelli Enterprises, the public was invited to join “break-out” groups based on the Struever Fidelco Cappelli LLC designation areas. The break-out groups were: (1) Downtown/Waterfront/Ludlow Village Districts, (2) Alexander Street / Nepperhan Valley Districts, and (3) Gateway District.

The summarized comments from the entire forum are divided into eleven general categories and are listed in descending order based on the number of comments regarding each issue.

The following is a brief summary of each of the categories, followed by a detailed listing of the comments.

- **Waterfront:** The most prevalent comments are in regards to the Hudson River Waterfront. Community members wanted assurances that there will be adequate public access and amenities along the waterfront. They also wanted the maintenance of current views of the Hudson, limited privatization of the area and sufficient greenery. They were wary of a wall of buildings being constructed on the Hudson.
- **Ballpark:** Comments about the ballpark fall just behind the concerns regarding the River. Most of the comments were negative or questioned the viability of the project.
- **Arts/Culture:** Arts and culture were next on the list, with comments that evoke a desire for public art and space for arts-related activities.
- **Historical Preservation:** The preservation of historical aspects of the city were represented next, by responses that wanted the incorporation of historic buildings into the project. There was also the desire to preserve the character of the city’s streets and parks as well as the request to adapt existing buildings for more current use.
- **Environment:** Comments relating to environmental concerns focused on the Brownfield clean-up, green building technology, wastewater treatment, restoration of wetlands and a possible expansion of the Beczak Environmental Center.
- **Transportation:** Transportation comments focused on enhancing public transit, redeveloping the Ludlow train station, increasing commuter parking and re-introducing trolleys.

- **Affordable Housing:** Next, there are concerns about affordable housing and gentrification. Comments addressed the desire for affordable housing, involving the Latino community and attracting a mix of incomes to the city.
- **Costs:** Comments are also concerned with the potential cost to taxpayers and the city, including the request for a comprehensive community bonus package, not funding the project with public money, having developers share the cost of creating and maintaining infrastructure and public components.
- **Education:** With regards to education, comments evoke a desire for a SUNY campus in Yonkers, the creation of a night school for students needing a high school diploma and provisions for technology training.
- **Jobs:** Concerns about jobs focused on not wanting low-paying jobs and were mostly driven by CSEA union members. There was also a concern about opportunities for new and local businesses.
- **Community Ideas:** Finally, the comments demonstrated the desire of community members to have the developers listen to their ideas and comments note that they believe that the developers have already worked out plans without concerning the community.

The Top 11 Topics

- 1. Hudson River Waterfront – Public Access and Open Space
(18 comments)**
- 2. The Ballpark
(14 comments)**
- 3. Arts and Culture (maintaining and enhancing new/existing)
(11 comments)**
- 4. Preservation of historical aspects of the city
(10 comments)**
- 5. Environmental Concerns
(10 comments)**
- 6. Transportation (traffic, parking, commuting)
(10 comments)**
- 7. Affordable Housing and Gentrification
(8 comments)**
- 8. Costs to city and taxpayers
(8 comments)**
- 9. Educational facilities
(6 comments)**
- 10. Jobs
(5 comments)**
- 11. Listen to Community Ideas/Plans
(5 comments)**

Downtown/Waterfront/Ludlow Village Districts

GENERAL

- Utilize and incorporate previous community-driven community plans and waterfront development plans
- Value community input, don't minimize or ignore their concerns and views

OPEN SPACE

- Provide access to waterfront for public uses (green space)
- Public access to waterfront is critical and "promenade" should not mean only paved or hard surface areas. Should have trees, grasses, flowerbeds. Need to balance environmental restoration and esthetic enhancements.
- Need for public recreation
- Open space and green space development along the waterfront must include publicly owned parcels
- Need exists for riverfront park space in SW Yonkers
- Day-lighting of Sawmill River should add environmental value for the City of Yonkers (more than aesthetics)
- Provide opportunities for active boating on the waterfront

TRANSPORTATION/INFRASTRUCTURE

- Enhance and augment public transportation in Yonkers to meet needs of increased residential population
- Current Yonkers wastewater treatment plant is operating above its designed capacity. How will new hookups be factored in for new development?
- Address issues of waste water and other infrastructure pressures with proposed development
- Need to increase basic services in Yonkers: medical, educational, supermarkets, public transportation
- Redevelopment of the Ludlow train station
- Ludlow Street will need a new traffic plan, traffic remediation study

CULTURAL/PRESERVATION

- Need for public cultural space on the waterfront
- Consider establishing a 1% art/culture tax in the City of Yonkers
- College/University centered development for the city of Yonkers
- Develop a SUNY College in Yonkers that emphasizes technology, civil engineering, environmental sciences
- Create a night school in Yonkers, utilizing existing buildings (e.g. old library) to help high school students successfully complete high school. Adult night school could also be incorporated into this idea
- Public Art Museum should be incorporated into this overall development plan, cultural facilities

- Overall redevelopment plan should incorporate historic preservation, cultural institutions
- Preservation of historic buildings important in the development area
- City Pier needs to be revitalized and recaptured for public use

DEVELOPMENT

- Limit development along the waterfront, while balancing issues relating to public access, open space, variety of uses (housing, cultural, limited commercial), access, building height, density and massing.
 - Development must not lead to privatization of the Hudson River waterfront
 - Design new development to attract a mix of incomes (low income, affordable, moderate, market rate)
 - What other elements will be incorporated into this plan? (movie theatre, upscale retail, restaurants, cultural facilities, public green space)
 - Consider hotels to house new tourist population, serve as a destination magnet
 - Address the need for increased affordable housing for low and moderate income Yonkers residents
 - Address impacts of redevelopment zone on existing business and property owners
 - How will gentrification pressures of this proposed development be mitigated?
 - Consider moving Ballpark to some other parcel, but make the central focus of this development an educational facility, or cultural facility
 - Ballpark should house a publicly owned team (e.g. Greenbay Packers)
 - Brownfield clean-up prior to development
 - Incorporate green building technology
 - Upscale development in Yonkers could be a good thing
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- Downtown Master Plan
 - Ludlow Transit Village
 - Day-lighting Sawmill River
 - Public Open Space
 - Mixed use development of residential and retail uses
 - office space, commuter parking
 - utilization of existing waterfront development plans *Local Waterfront Revitalization Plan*
 - Access to waterfront for public uses (green space)
 - Brownfield clean-up prior to development
 - Low density residential development along waterfront, maintaining waterfront view corridors
 - Riverfront park space for SW Yonkers
 - Pier needs to be revitalized and recaptured for public use

- Public Art Museum should be incorporated into this overall development plan, cultural facilities
- Preservation of historic buildings in the development area
- Hotel to house new tourist population, serve as a destination magnet
- Want to see overall redevelopment plan incorporate historic preservation, cultural institutions
- Development of a SUNY College in Yonkers that emphasizes technology, civil engineering, environmental sciences
- Open space and green space development along the waterfront must include publicly owned parcels
- Ballpark should house a publicly owned team (e.g. Green Bay Packers)
- Utilize and incorporate previous community-driven community plans and waterfront development plans
- Development must not lead to privatization of the Hudson River waterfront
- Value community input, don't minimize or ignore their concerns and views
- The need to create a night school in Yonkers, utilizing existing buildings (e.g. old library) to help high school students successfully complete high school. Adult night school could also be incorporated into this idea
- Enhance and augment public transportation in Yonkers to meet needs of increased residential population
- Active boating opportunities on the waterfront
- Ludlow Street will need a new traffic plan, traffic remediation study
- Address impacts of redevelopment zone on existing business and property owners
- Address the need for increased affordable housing for low and moderate income Yonkers residents
- How will gentrification pressures of this proposed development be mitigated
- What structural impacts will development and construction have on homes on Buena Vista (lots H + I development)
- College/University centered development for the city of Yonkers
- Upscale development in Yonkers could be a good thing
- Redevelopment of the Ludlow train station
- Need to increase basic services in Yonkers: medical, educational, supermarkets, public transportation
- Incorporate green building technology
- How will waste water and other infrastructure pressures be addressed in this proposed development?
- Current Yonkers wastewater treatment plant is operating above its designed capacity. How will new hookups be factored in for new development?
- What other elements will be incorporated into this plan? (movie theatre, upscale retail, restaurants, cultural facilities, public green space)

- Consider moving Ballpark to some other parcel, but make the central focus of this development an educational facility, or cultural facility
- Consider establishing a 1% art/culture tax in the City of Yonkers
- Day-lighting of Sawmill River should be environmentally value added for the City of Yonkers (more than aesthetics)
- Need for public recreation
- Public access to waterfront is critical and “promenade” should not mean only paved or hard surface areas. Should have trees, grasses, flowerbeds. Need to balance environmental restoration and esthetic enhancements.
- The need for public cultural space on the waterfront
- Design new development to attract a mix of incomes (low income, affordable, moderate, market rate)

Gateway District

- New White Plains area
- No ballpark
- Proposal for a Technological center
- Desire to see an plan for overall development
- Artistic, music theater, should be included
- All income levels live and work
- No opportunities for new business
- Environmental friendly buildings
- Green space should be preserved
- Emphasize educational system
- Own Community College in Yonkers (4-years)
- One central location with state-of-art equipment, this will help budget crisis
- Small retail should be built
- Look at hydraulics and natural restoration where possible, of Saw Mill day-lighting
- Keep jobs for residents of Yonkers (union jobs)
- New is done at the expense of the old
- Public art very important to maintain and develop
- Involvement of the Latino community and maintain existing businesses
- Movie theater is a concern, less people go to the movies
- Yonkers needs to get fair market value for properties
- No corporate welfare who is paying for project
- Who will be operating ballpark?
- Affordable residential housing
- Will water be ecologically sound?
- How many skilled jobs?
- Will the views keep its integrity
- How much housing will be built?
- Ballpark on fifth floor is a concern
- Ballpark is a concern
- How many people will attend the ballpark?
- No analysis on the place for the ballpark
- People have not had their say
- Maximize economic value of Chicken Island site to support education and housing and employment
- Ballpark could be a hindrance
- Traffic and noise concerns with the ballpark
- Out of question, viable sites Chicken Island was the least viable
- Comprehensive community benefits package must be implemented
- Governmental parking garage is supposed to be demolished, who pays?

- What happens to ballpark in the off-season?
- Dome over ballpark
- Yonkers should be compared to Buffalo, Rochester, Etc. not to NYC or White Plains
- Performing center on the street by proposed canal
- Paddle boats would be an asset
- Ballpark should be multiple use
- Pay attention to volume of people (quality of life issue)
- Is ballpark a concern for developers?
- Project has no approved where the real estate tax benefit is
- What are the projections from the developer?
- Concern is low-paying, no-benefit jobs, what is really being created?
- Tax revenue for the city
- Comprehensive public transportation plan to connect ALL Yonkers projects
- Maintain, restore and enhance character of local streets
- Historic preservation of buildings
- Museum of all the diverse populations of Yonkers
- Community Center
- Technological trainings
- We have existing office space that is not filled, e.g. N. Valley, more space being built is a concern
- What do people want to see as far as space?
- Are the developers qualified for the size of the project?
- Will the charged be funded publicly?
- Developers should share the cost of infrastructure
- What are the emergency plans for the 5th floor ballpark?
- Planning seems to be done before public input
- Is there an alternative plan is there is no ballpark?

A l e x a n d e r S t r e e t / N e p p e r h a n V a l l e y D i s t r i c t s

- Time sufficient for community input
- Height for each phase not okay
- Upland NBRHD opposed to blocking views
- No wall of buildings
- Maintaining and enhancing, upgrading existing uses: parks, canoeing
- Reinstate marshes, wetlands
- Family and senior housing i.e. For community mixed-income
- 6 story housing with green space (like Glenwood Gardens)
- Clean up park
- Marina tied to Museum, expanded and connected to river (restaurant etc.)
- Expand Beczak Environmental Education Center
- Smart growth with destination open space and additional connection over train (only 5 existing)
- 1st class jobs locally, long-term
- More pedestrian access like west Greenwich Village
- Need parking
- Glenwood Power Station-continue current planning
- Bridge from BIC to Glenwood
- Upland HSG Preservation (and Warburton avenue mansions)
- Cost and maintenance
- Archaeology of plans, documents
- Leverage existing resources (cultural)
- Need piers
- Single-family/obtainable, not just affordable
- Preserve public areas/access
- Adaptive reuse of existing historic properties/districts
- Upgrade sewage capacity versus dumping into Hudson
- Reintroduce old trams
- Expand the arts
- Look at the whole area comprehensively