

Vision and Goals Workshop

Date: 11/13/2025

Location: 921 E 228th Street

What Happened

NYC Planning in partnership with Council Members Kevin Riley and Eric Dinowitz hosted the first public meeting and workshop for the White Plains Road Neighborhood Plan. Several government organizations including the Department of Transportation (DOT), Parks and Recreation (Parks), Small Business Services (SBS), Housing Preservation and Development (HPD), and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA), also attended to support the meeting. The goal of this meeting was to create a collective community vision that will guide the neighborhood planning process. As we are at the beginning of the planning process, this event closed out the Learn phase.

Event Summary

The public meeting was comprised of two parts: an open house with boards displayed in a science fair style to share what we've learned from data on the neighborhood and what we've learned from the community so far, and a workshop to create vision statements through visualization activities.

During the open house, community members could view 7 insight boards based on different topics. The insight boards included data points showing how government-maintained datasets addressed each insight and summarized what we learned based on the 700+ comments collected to date. While reviewing the boards, community members were invited to reflect on the accuracy of the insight statements.

The insight statements included themes of community influence, culture, transit, public safety, housing, parks, sanitation, and youth.

At the community influence board, participants shared that there is a lack of community spaces in the corridor [1]. Community members noted concerns about oversized buildings, parking management, and street-level and sidewalk design. [2], [3] They also expressed hopes for more local job opportunities from new developments. [4]

At the culture board, participants shared a desire to strengthen the corridor's cultural vibrancy, emphasizing support for Afro-Caribbean businesses and festivals, [5],[6] a greater diversity of small businesses,[7] and more places to sit and eat. [8] They also highlighted the need for better access to resources for local business owners, [9], [10] while noting concerns about community mistrust in government [11] and the importance of

Citations

[1]: Wouldn't it be great if...there were more cafe's and nice spaces to spend time with family

[2]: Wouldn't it be great if...improve street level, large buildings without thought can seem overwhelming

[3]: Wouldn't it be great if...too big buildings for small streets, manage garages and parking management

[4]: Wouldn't it be great if...local residents received job opportunities from developments and can create business at an affordable in their residential community

[5]: Wouldn't it be great if... Help fund store Afro Caribbean. A lot of them close

[6]: Wouldn't it be great if Afro Caribbean festival from gun hill to 233rd.

[7]: Wouldn't it be great if...greater diversity of small businesses

[8]: Wouldn't it be great if... There were more places to sit and eat/more dine-in restaurants

[9]: Wouldn't it be great if...more education on licensing/permitting to keep businesses in the district longer/refuse businesses turnover

[10]: Business owners don't know where to get resources

[11]: African immigrants don't want involvement because of past experience with government. Where they come from "if you make noise, you disappear"

[12]: Wouldn't it be great if... Keep Kingston Tropical Bakery right where it is

[13]: Wouldn't it be great if there is more living space in our homes.

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preserving beloved institutions like Kingston Tropical Bakery. [12]

At the housing board, participants shared hopes for more spacious, livable homes, [13] improved pest control, [14] and the integration of community spaces within new affordable housing. [14] They emphasized maintaining residential character while adding affordable units, [16] increasing support for first-time homebuyers, [17] and expanding rent-stabilized housing options that are not limited to income-restricted models. [18]

Participants at the public safety board called for improved lighting, [19], [20] more consistent police presence, especially in high-crime areas and transit stations, [21], [22], [23], [24] and adequate staffing for the local precinct. [25] They also expressed a desire to build a neighborhood where residents feel proud, safe, and unified.

Participants at the parks board emphasized expanding and improving access to green space, including turning paper streets into parks, [26], enhancing ADA access, [27] and creating more walking paths and pedestrian/bike connections. [28] They also highlighted opportunities to link Bronx Park and Shoelace Park, [29] improve sidewalk conditions, [30] and strengthen environmental [31] and cultural vibrancy along the corridor.

At the sanitation board, participants called for cleaner, safer streets [32], [33] through better trash containers, [34], [35] more frequent street cleaning, and greater accountability for storefront maintenance. [36] They also highlighted the need for more trash cans, [37] youth jobs in sanitation, improved park cleanliness and lighting, and safer conditions under the elevated train. [38]

At the intergenerational board, participants envisioned a future where the corridor is more collective and community-oriented, [39], [40] emphasizing the need for environmental education [41] youth resource centers, and programs that provide bikes, instruments, and activities beyond work. [42] They also highlighted opportunities for teen jobs and internships in sanitation,

Citations

[14]: Wouldn't it be great if we get rid of the rodents

[15]: Wouldn't it be great if we integrated community spaces in affordable housing.

[16]: Wouldn't it be great if we maintain residential character while adding some affordable units. More support for first time home owners

[17]: Wouldn't it be great if...there were opportunities for younger people to own homes

[18]: Wouldn't it be great if there are rent stabilized housing options, and not necessarily income restricted

[19]: Wouldn't it be great if there was increased lighting. So that we can feel and be safer

[20]: Wouldn't it be great if... There were improved, brighter street lighting

[21]: Wouldn't it be great if we have more law enforcement around the area. So that we can help stop gang violence

[22]: Wouldn't it be great if there was police on areas where people feel less safe. So that we can be able to walk freely around your neighborhood

[23]: Wouldn't it be great if there were more police at every train station. So that we can prevent subway surfing

[24]: Wouldn't it be great if police were at each train/bus station and other high crime areas. So that we can be safer

[25]: Wouldn't it be great if there are more PO's issued to the 47. It is one of the largest in NYC and has not taken in to consideration increase of residents living in the 47. So that we can stop bringing PO's from other precincts

[26]: Wouldn't it be great if...The city owned Paper Streets on Mickle Ave and on Chester St could become parks. So that we can... have equitable access to green space

[27]: Wouldn't it be great if...ADA access to Park at 213 and 216 St

[28]: Wouldn't it be great if...more walking paths. Save Seton Falls

[29]: Wouldn't it be great if...DCP could demap south bound Bronx Blvd between 211th street and Duncomb Ave. So that we can... connect Bronx Park and Shoelace Park with a continuous Bronx River...

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more trash cans, and greater accountability for storefront cleanliness to support a cleaner, more engaging environment for young people. [43], [44]

During the workshop, community members completed a series of activities in small groups to discuss and draft a vision statement. In the first visualization activity, community members used everyday objects and art props to recreate a favorite childhood memory and to model their ideal White Plains Road. Some of the values that were shared from community member's favorite childhood memories included being outdoors, time with faith-based organizations, and quality time with family members. Community members were then asked to keep those values in mind while they modeled their ideal White Plains Road. Many groups shared an ideal future where there are intergenerational spaces, easy access to nature, and spaces for play.

For the second part of this activity, community members were asked to draft a vision statement and share out a summary of their table's discussion. Overall, community members desire for White Plains Road to become a safe, accessible environment with intentionally designed intergenerational spaces that foster community engagement, connection, and a sense of community ownership. Community members explained these aspirations during a share out where they emphasized quality of life issues such as excessive trash, inconsistent public transportation schedules, and unsafe public realm. They highlighted the lack of activities and retail diversity along the corridor and spoke about the need for these spaces to be in the neighborhood rather than outside it. Several young people spoke emphatically about the need for safe spaces, feelings of disconnection in the corridor, and a lack of connection to their own community.

Citations

[30]: Wouldn't it be great if... Sidewalks were in better condition

[31]: Wouldn't it be great if we had more trees and environmental clean up and safety from pollution, related to traffic. So that we can more protection from extreme heat and flooding.

[32]: Wouldn't it be great if...The community organization would come to clean up more often

[33]: Wouldn't it be great if...The street cleaner were back. So that we can... cleaner streets

[34]: Wouldn't it be great if... Better trash containers to deter animals. So that we can... Keep the neighborhood/sidewalks cleaner and safer

[35]: Wouldn't it be great if... More trash cans near/on commercial corridors. Increased pick-up by DSNY. The increase currently is not enough

[36]: Wouldn't it be great if...The store owners on White Plains Road were held accountable for keeping the front of their stores cleaned. So that we can...Have clean streets and sidewalks as we travel and shop on White Plain Road

[37]: Wouldn't it be great if...We put trash bags into containers. So that we can...stop animals from tearing open the garbage.

[38]: Wouldn't it be great if...remove bike lanes under the elevated train. So that we can... be safer and cleaner driving and the sanitation department can clean the streets better when cars move

[39]: It is the year 2055, White Plains Road is collective. Thanks to a growing sense of community, walkable environment/ thriving businesses, and arts programs for families and culture.

[40]: Wouldn't it be great if... Multi intergenerational connections

[41]: Wouldn't it be great if... Education on trash and the environment, education and resource center

[42]: Wouldn't it be great if... Give away more bikes, balls, cameras, instruments, give these kids something to do other than work

[43]: Wouldn't it be great if...If we had more trashcans throughout the street. Also if we had internships for teens. So that we can...have cleaner street and a way for teens to make some money

[44]: Wouldn't it be great if... More youth employment of community services and invest in the youth