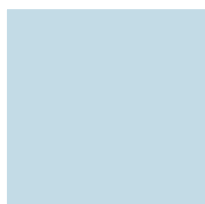
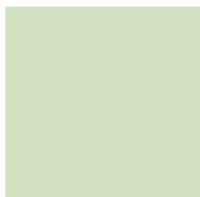
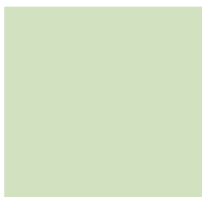


## **DOWNTOWN CHAPPAQUA**

**A Placemaking Strategy  
for Revitalization**

**JUNE 2007**



Report Prepared for:  
The Town of New Castle

Report Prepared by:



With Assistance from:  
Chappaqua Downtown Advisory Committee - Bal Agarwal, Maud  
A. Bailey, June K. Blanc, Tara Caverzasi, Jerry Curran, Al Hutin, Jr.,  
Eric Nicolaysen, Jonathan B. Rosenbloom, Robin Schlaff, Michael  
Wolfenson, Frederic Zonsius

Town Administrator - Jerry Faiella  
Assistant to the Town Administrator - Louise Barbaro  
Town Board Member - Elise Kessler-Mottel  
Town Supervisor - Janet L. Wells

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **INTRODUCTION | 5**

- 5 About PPS
- 5 What Makes a Great Place?
- 7 Designing and Managing Public Spaces Successfully

## **THE PROCESS | 9**

### **OVERALL THEMES | 11**

- 11 Create New Destinations and an Anchor for the Downtown
- 13 Make the Downtown Pedestrian-Friendly
- 13 Create More Usable Public Spaces
- 15 Enhance the Downtown through Programming
- 17 Improving Business in the Downtown
- 17 Encourage New Development to Strengthen the Downtown

### **SITE-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS | 19**

- 19 Civic Center
- 23 Intersection of Woodburn Avenue and South Greeley Avenue
- 27 Chappaqua Train Station
- 31 Chappaqua Triangle
- 35 Intersection of Greeley Avenue and King Street
- 39 Upper King Street

### **OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS | 41**

- 41 Lighting
- 41 Sidewalks
- 45 Landscape Beautification and Maintenance
- 47 Establishing a Business Improvement District
- 49 Infill Development

### **FUTURE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS | 51**

- 51 Parking
- 53 Performing Arts Center

## **NEXT STEPS | 55**

### **APPENDIX | 57**

- 57 Downtown Chappaqua Survey
- 63 Retailer Survey
- 64 Downtown Chappaqua Workshop 1 & 2 Summary



# INTRODUCTION

The way we build cities, the way we make places, can have a profound effect on what kind of lives are lived within those spaces... – WILLIAM H. WHYTE

In September of 2006, the Town of New Castle and Project for Public Spaces, Inc. (PPS) launched a community-driven process to revitalize downtown Chappaqua, the commercial center of the Town of New Castle. PPS was asked to facilitate Placemaking Workshops to look at the strengths and weaknesses of Chappaqua through the eyes of the people who live and work there. Together with the Chappaqua Downtown Advisory Committee, PPS developed a vision for downtown Chappaqua and supporting recommendations based upon the local knowledge of Chappaqua residents and PPS's 30 years of experience in what makes a great place.

## ABOUT PPS

Project for Public Spaces is a non-profit corporation that has worked in 2000 communities in the United States and abroad to improve public spaces so they are more active, usable, and attractive destinations. PPS has become widely known for its innovative approach to community revitalization that focuses on the behavior, expressed needs and collaborative visioning of community members. In our 30 years of experience, the same theme has come up repeatedly: More and more people are feeling a loss of community and a lack of control over, and connection to, the changes taking place in their public environments. PPS is working actively to engage communities in the planning process in order to bring a sense of community and a sense of place back to our cities and towns.

## WHAT MAKES A GREAT PLACE?

A great public space is like a magnet for people. People go there not only because they must pass through on business, but because it is just pleasant to be there. They are drawn by – what? What makes an otherwise ordinary plaza, street or downtown into a magnet for people?

In its 30 years studying what makes a good public place, whether a park or a downtown, Project for Public Spaces has found four key attributes:

The first of these is ***Comfort and Image*** – users describe the place as “safe,” “clean,” “green,” “charming,” “attractive” and “historic.” There is comfortable seating; the space feels sheltering and comfortably scaled; walking into and through the space is appealing.

The second feature of a good public space is a variety of ***Uses and Activities*** that meet the community's needs and make the space interesting. Users describe the space as “fun,” “special,” “vital” and “real.” Food vending and other retail activities may go on in the space; celebrations occur; children play there.

A third attribute is ***Access and Linkage*** – the retail and services is well-connected to the surrounding community, to transit facilities, to streets, to parking. There are no dead ends; the downtown function and connections can be understood at a glance, and its streets are walkable.





And last, a good public space has ***Sociability*** – the elderly sit and gossip; chess or other board games are ongoing activities; people meet acquaintances and stop to visit; the entire community gathers there. There is a sense of ownership and pride in the place.

Public spaces that have these four key attributes do not occur by accident. Despite the apparent intangibility of these features, good places can be planned and created with predictable results.

### MANAGING PUBLIC SPACES SUCCESSFULLY

Successful public spaces in a downtown can be an enormous asset to the building owners, businesses, employees and residents. They can improve the image and enhance the economic value of the downtown and its properties. But none of this comes automatically. To realize their potential, even well-designed public spaces must be well-managed and well-programmed.

The principal public space management tasks that should be considered for downtown Chappaqua are described below:

***Maintenance.*** The more used and loved a public space is, the more maintenance it requires. But regular cleaning and repair of the facility to high standards more than repays the cost. Prompt attention to items that could be easily deferred, such as broken curbs or removal of graffiti, says that someone is in charge, that the downtown is respected, and that the public is protected.

***Security and Hospitality.*** If the public spaces in a downtown are well-designed and busy, security will not be an issue. The more secure people feel in a space, the more users the space attracts, and the more secure the space will be.

***Programming.*** Once the basic “clean, safe and friendly” needs are met, programming the public spaces becomes not only possible, but much easier, and the economic potential of the space can be realized. “Programming” refers to the wide variety of planned activities and to all the facilities and equipment related to them: furnishing the space

appropriately, for example, with chairs that can be moved from sun to shade and back; operating a retail program, with vending carts or a seasonal cafe; producing a regular concert series or a one-time festival; hosting a community gathering, and operating a regular farmers’ market.

***Marketing and Promotion.*** Promoting the events and activities that take place in the downtown is an important adjunct to programming. Most spaces, especially early in a new public-space management program, require this commitment to marketing and promotion to generate large enough event participants and to raise donations and revenue.

***Coordination with Adjacent Retail Uses.*** The public spaces and the surrounding ground floor commercial uses should be seamlessly integrated. The public should flow from outside to inside and vice versa with as few barriers as possible. The activities of the restaurant and retail tenants should spill right into the plazas and streets, and the outdoor activities and circulation should move smoothly through the buildings.





# THE PROCESS

Working together, Project for Public Spaces, Inc. and the Town of New Castle's Chappaqua Downtown Advisory Committee conducted a thorough study of existing conditions in the study area and elicited the community's opinions, perceptions and suggestions for making improvements. The process was designed both to bring forth needed information and to help build interest in and a commitment to the potential for improvements among the area's diverse businesses and residents.

This process included several key components that contributed to the findings in this report:

- Initial meetings with the Downtown Advisory Committee to identify goals, stakeholders, issues, goals, and opportunities.
- On-site observations of vehicular and pedestrian use of specific streets, intersections, and other public places throughout Chappaqua.
- Photographic documentation and time-lapse filming of existing conditions, including streets, sidewalks, buildings, street-level uses, popular uses and activities, pedestrian paths, etc.
- Pedestrian and merchant surveys were prepared and analyzed by PPS to ascertain perceptions, sensitivities, desires and needs concerning issues such as pedestrian comfort, safety and security, retail needs, events and programs, and appearance and character of the study area; the surveys were collected and the responses were tabulated by the Town of New Castle.
- Two Community Placemaking Workshops for six study area sites in downtown Chappaqua were held on October 14th and November 2nd to learn about issues that are considered most pressing, brainstorm ideas for improvement, and outline specific actions. Both workshops included a slideshow illustrating Placemaking examples from other cities and towns to begin the brainstorming process, stimulate new thinking, and generate interest and participation. PPS then facilitated a "Place Performance Evaluation Game," during which teams of stakeholders evaluated the study area and drew their own conclusions about the challenges and potential solution in those spaces. Opportunities for the downtown were illustrated, creating a vision map.
- Development of an interactive website presenting results of Placemaking Workshops, results from a residents and retailers survey, and related content from PPS. This was used to elicit additional comments and recommendations from website visitors.
- Sketches illustrating selected recommendations were prepared based on the results of the community workshops and surveys, and were presented to the Downtown Advisory Committee for their ideas and revisions.

What follows are steps to reinvigorate downtown Chappaqua. Guided by Chappaqua residents' local knowledge and input, recommendations for downtown Chappaqua were made and a grand vision supported by six overall themes came to light. Additionally outlined are potential studies that could build on these ideas to further the outcomes for downtown Chappaqua, and the implementation steps for how the Town of New Castle and its residents can build a better Chappaqua through Placemaking.







# OVERALL THEMES

The Placemaking process produced a great number of specific recommendations that are described in the body of this report. More than that, though, a consensus emerged around ***improving the quality of life in downtown Chappaqua so that it becomes a vibrant community destination and economically viable business district.*** This vision will guide the course of the recommendations and the future of Chappaqua, preserving and enhancing it as the Town of New Castle's charming town center.

Currently the downtown is a destination for a variety of uses – commuters taking the train, students attending the Bell Middle School and residents shopping or going to the library, but there is little synergy or triangulation among these uses. That is, they do not support each other or relate to each other physically. And, although some of the restaurants and shops in the downtown are well-loved destinations, their activity does not have much of a presence outside, as they lack attractive window displays, good lighting, and outdoor dining. In addition to poor inside-to-outside visual connections, existing public spaces are underutilized and disconnected from downtown destinations.



There was consensus among participants in this study that achieving the vision for downtown Chappaqua will involve six different yet related themes:

## CREATE NEW DESTINATIONS AND AN ANCHOR FOR THE DOWNTOWN

Participants of the two workshops and the surveys came to an agreement that downtown Chappaqua does not offer many reasons to visit unless you are commuting out of the town and/or work in the town. It became apparent that the top two destinations in the downtown (Starbucks and the Metro-North Railroad Station) were not ideal reasons for people to visit and spend quality time in the downtown. One of the top two destinations is even a means to leave Chappaqua.

There was a strong feeling in the community and among the Advisory Committee members that existing destinations should be strengthened and connected and new destinations created within the existing civic and commercial centers. A new cultural destination with performing arts, exhibits, art workshops, orchestral performances and more could be developed as an anchor that would convene residents and visitors in downtown Chappaqua. Through new destinations and an anchor, the downtown can become a place where one could spend an afternoon, an evening, or an entire day.





Amenities for Pedestrian-Friendly Streets



Programming Public Space



## MAKE THE DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN-FRIENDLY

An overall goal shared by Chappaqua residents at both workshops was to strike a different balance between pedestrians and vehicles. Workshop participants, the steering committee, and survey respondents agreed that improved traffic flow was an important goal, but not at the expense of improved pedestrian circulation.

From data collected by Vollmer Associates and the time lapse films, we found that congestion was intense only for short periods of time during peak hours. It is also expected that with the impending New York State Department of Transportation (DOT) bridge project that some vehicular congestion will be alleviated.

Thus the primary directive was to improve pedestrian space and mobility, and provide amenities that promote walking and bicycling through the downtown, which in turn would help vehicular circulation. Calming traffic, increasing pedestrian crossings, improving sidewalks, and adding signage will create a pedestrian-friendly downtown where one can walk from the Town Hall all the way to the Post Office or up to the Talbots Shopping Center.

- Create destinations that people are comfortable walking to and fill the gaps in between.
- Encourage active ground floor uses – retail and restaurants – throughout the downtown.
- Create interest at the ground floor with enticing retail display windows, murals on blank walls, and façade improvements.
- Improve pedestrian safety by calming traffic with sidewalk extensions, four-way stops and pedestrian islands.
- Repair and widen sidewalks, ensuring that they are ADA compliant with curb ramps.
- Add new crosswalks and highlight existing ones with bolder and wider striping.
- Highlight pedestrian walkways, alleyways and paths with better and more uniform signs, lighting, and beautification.
- Provide more bicycle racks and ensure their strategic placement.
- Enhance bus stops with benches and shelters, which will also serve as amenities for pedestrians.

## CREATE MORE USABLE PUBLIC SPACES

Residents vocalized that there really were not many places for the community to gather in the downtown or even comfortable places to sit. While there are numerous open spaces for public use, most are provided by the school or Town for specific recreational uses. The Triangle, the centerpiece at the entrance to the downtown, is a symbolic rather than usable public space. Providing public spaces that are rich with a variety of uses will encourage people to linger in the downtown, and with better places for outdoor eating and socializing, downtown Chappaqua will become a more vibrant place.

- Create more places to sit, congregate, and meet people by clustering seating and “triangulating:” creating a synergy between compatible uses such as seating, food, coffee, flowerbeds, shade trees, information kiosks or other pedestrian amenities.
- Widen sidewalks in strategic places to create more gathering places.
- Create a plaza and a better performance space for the downtown near the Town Hall to create a real civic center.
- Improve the public space at the train station and Memorial Plaza for waiting and other activities.
- Create focal points and meeting places by adding water features or public art to open spaces.
- Relocate the tot-lot behind Town Hall to an easily accessible, visible space.
- Increase activity by enhancing the spaces around key destinations such as the library, the Community Center and the Horace Greeley House.





## ENHANCE THE DOWNTOWN THROUGH PROGRAMMING

As evident from the workshops and surveys, downtown Chappaqua is active during scheduled events, such as soccer league game days and Community Day. These are days that mark an exciting, inviting small town downtown as opposed to a downtown that is only visited out of necessity. Building upon the energy of these special- days with more programming of events and activities will increase the vitality and attraction of downtown Chappaqua.

- Organize more outdoor concerts, theater performances, dancing under the stars, and movie nights at the gazebo.
- Celebrate the visual arts with art shows, craft markets, temporary sculpture gardens and other art installations.
- Increase activities for families and youth with weekly family nights at local restaurants, teen nights at the community center or events at the old fire house.
- Arrange game tournaments, such as chess tournaments or basketball nights.
- Make downtown Chappaqua into a day and night destination by incorporating community activities and business promotions into evening events.
- Hold more public events at the train station and Memorial Plaza.
- Add more teen and intergenerational programming to the community center, since there is currently little activity for these age demographics.
- Expand upon the current space in front of and behind the community center, making the center a more usable public space.
- Create more opportunities for community gatherings around healthy activities, such as a farmers' market, a community garden or community farm, and walking, biking or running events.
- Organize a "Day of Shopping" event to benefit the Chamber of Commerce or possible Business Improvement District (BID), the Chappaqua Garden Club, and other downtown improvement organizations, raising immediate funds for them to make short- term improvements.
- Coordinate marketing and revitalization efforts between the Town, the downtown businesses or eventual BID, and other civic organizations.







## IMPROVING BUSINESS IN THE DOWNTOWN

Residents expressed concern about the vibrancy of downtown business. They desire a better mix of businesses, while storeowners would like to attract more customers. Both residents and businesses suggested improved maintenance, and a downtown environment with a more cohesive look and feel. It became apparent that the presence of a Business Improvement District, or at least a more active Chamber of Commerce, would help to ensure the health and longevity of local businesses, and facilitate improvements that would benefit all common areas. The creation of a BID, or a similar type of entity, would lead to more collaboration amongst businesses, and generate a pool of money and resources for downtown enhancements.

- Residents said that a better business mix would bring them downtown more often. Survey suggestions:
  - o More restaurants, a shoe store, a shoe repair store, an ice cream shop, a bakery, a stationery store and more internationally flavored stores.
  - o Keep businesses locally-owned.
  - o Limit or exclude certain types of office uses from first floor occupation, such as professional offices, banks and real estate offices.
  - o Increase business venues for entertainment purposes, including a jazz club and a movie theatre.
- o Create and enforce design guidelines regarding signage, graphics, landscape, lighting, storefront & back facades, awnings, window displays.
- o Amend the zoning ordinance to make sidewalk cafes easily permissible.
- o Create a Business Improvement District which oversees management, maintenance, enforcement, cleaning, programming and beautification, supplementing the Town's efforts.

## ENCOURAGE NEW DEVELOPMENT TO STRENGTHEN THE DOWNTOWN

Many residents described long-term visions for Chappaqua that included the development of more and denser retail, parking structures to serve commuters, shoppers and downtown employees, and mixed-use development near the train station. Residents suggested several sites for new development, including the train station's south parking lot, the parking lot across from Susan Lawrence, the Bell School ball fields, the parking lot adjacent to Bell School, the gas station and the Citibank lot.

These themes, if carried out throughout Chappaqua's downtown, will result in a vibrant community destination and an economically nourished business district.



Site 1: Civic Center



# SITE-SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS



Tot-lot behind Town Hall



Gazebo in Recreation Field

To address these issues in more detail, site-specific recommendations were made during the two Placemaking workshops, on surveys, and advisory committee meetings.

## SITE 1: CIVIC CENTER

What we call the Civic Center is the area occupied by the Town Hall and the Police Department, the adjacent Recreation Field with its gazebo, and, across South Greeley Avenue, the New Castle Town Library. Currently this area feels remote and separate from the commercial district: a seemingly unwalkable stretch of road even though it is only a few hundred feet long. Though there is ample space for activity, community gathering, and civic-engagement, few residents frequent the area unless they have business at one of the three facilities. Residents realize the abundance of resources located there and would like to see this area flourish as a real destination, a real civic center.



Chappaqua Library



South Greeley Ave in front of Recreation Field



Interactive Fountain



Traffic-Calmed Pedestrian Crossing



Creative Playground



- Reshape the Town Hall front lawn into a public plaza where people will want to gather, eat lunch, take their breaks, and spend time:
  - o Close off the driveway adjacent to the Recreation Field, per PPS illustration, to enhance the existing small bridge over the stream and to create a larger green for the Civic Center.
  - o Supply outdoor seating and tables that accompany a restaurant/cafe that caters to daytime employees and families dining out in the evening.
  - o Create a focal point, such as sculpture, a fountain, or a sculpture garden for the Town Hall plaza area.
  - o Build climbable play structures or art forms behind the baseball field diamond.
  - o Make the stream more visible and enhance its borders with natural landscaping and shade trees, and create a sitting area near the bridge.
  - o Plant more trees to screen the train station parking from the Recreation Field.
  - o Replace current chain link fencing along the Recreation Field with attractive fencing that is light and unobtrusive.
- Make the front entrance to the Library more like an outdoor reading room:
  - o Create a sitting and reading area on the north or west side of the library with outdoor seating, tables, planters and a kiosk serving coffee and snacks.
  - o Move the tot-lot playground to the library so that toddlers can play while mothers and nannies read.
- Calm the intersection between the Library and the Town Hall:
  - o Calm traffic at this gateway to the downtown with a short, planted median.
  - o Add a crosswalk that uses the median as a pedestrian refuge.



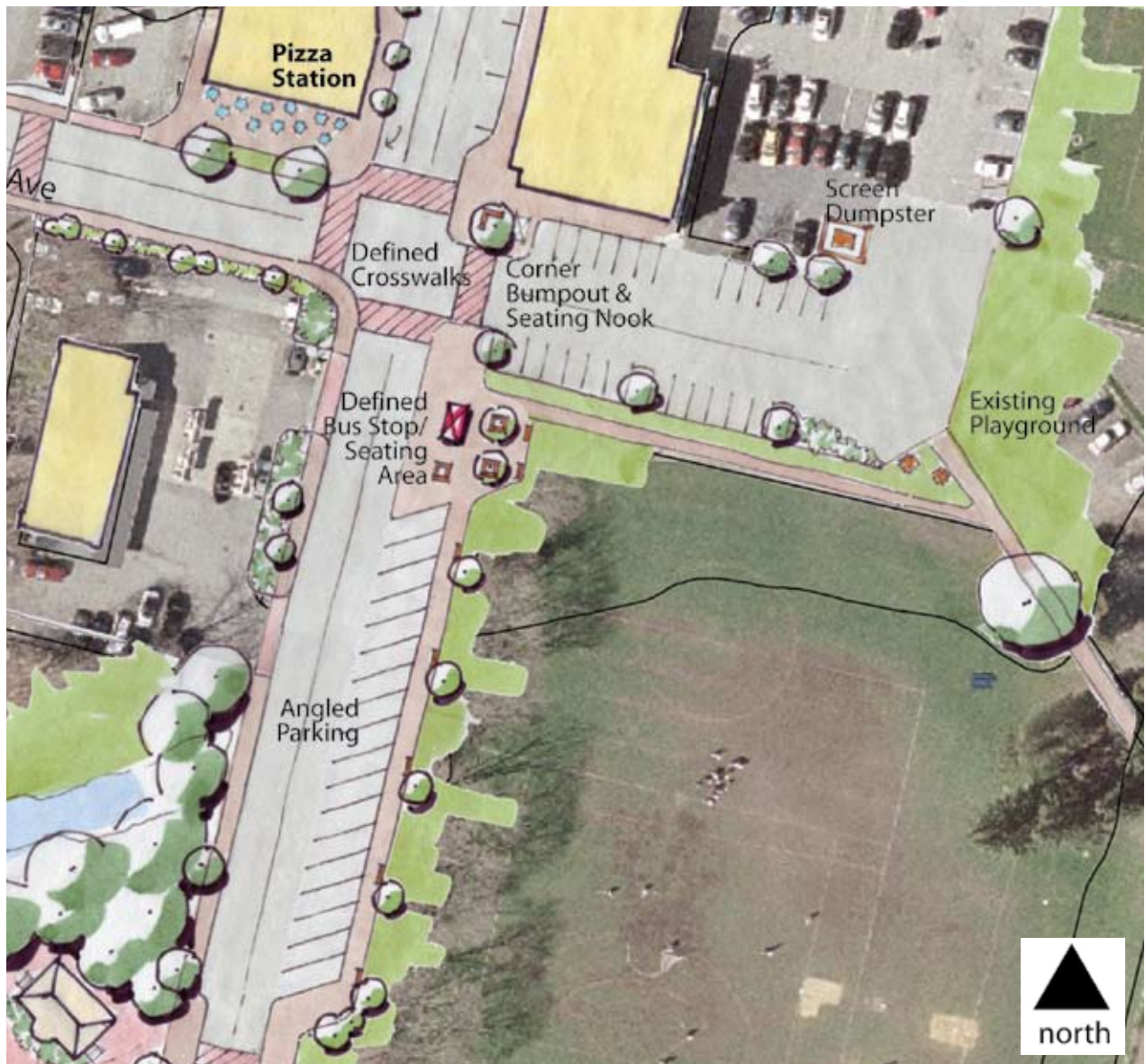
Amenities outside Library



Cafe in front of Library



Outdoor Reading Room adjacent to Library



Site 2: Intersection of Woodburn Ave and S. Greeley Ave.



Directing Traffic at Woodburn Ave. and S. Greeley Ave.



Pizza Station on Woodburn Ave.



## SITE 2: INTERSECTION OF WOODBURN AVENUE AND SOUTH GREELEY AVENUE

This intersection is the main entrance to one of the most frequented destinations in Chappaqua, the Metro-North Railroad Station. At peak commuting times in the morning and evening, this unsignalized intersection becomes busy with motorists attempting to enter and exit Woodburn Avenue. In the morning this coincides with school drop-offs as parents use Woodburn Avenue as a “jug-handle” to reach the parking lot next to the Bell School when left turns are prohibited.

Congestion is alleviated at these times by a police officer directing traffic, who serves as a temporary traffic signal, but who also pays attention to the needs of school children and other pedestrians crossing South Greeley, and keeps the intersection free from queues of vehicles waiting to go over the bridge. While delays are common at these times, they are relatively brief and residents thought it unnecessary to add a signal or a four-way stop.



South Greeley Ave.



Woodburn Ave.

This intersection presents another opportunity to slow traffic entering the downtown and create a clear entrance to the train station, while creating safer pedestrian crossings.



Crossing S. Greeley Ave.



Outside Dunkin' Donuts



No Sidewalks on Woodburn Ave.





Landscaped bump-out



Traffic calmed Pedestrian Crossing



Bus Shelter



Information booth and shelter



- Improve pedestrian walkability at the intersection and also to the train station:
  - o Maintain the traffic officer as he provides a safer, kinder and more human alternative to a signal.
  - o Restripe and widen crosswalks, or pave entire intersection with brick pavers to slow traffic.
  - o Install curb extensions to shorten walking distances.
  - o Create a pedestrian “promenade” to the train station along both sides of Woodburn Avenue with sidewalks, pedestrian-scaled lighting and street trees.
  - o Close the Woodburn Avenue entrance to the gas station and add trees and planters.
- Enhance seating areas at the intersection:
  - o Enhance outdoor dining at the Pizza Station with trees and planters.
  - o Add seating areas at the curb extensions with trees and landscaping.
- Improve parking lot traffic flow by changing the exit only driveway behind the Pizza Station to entrance only, so that traffic flows from the Woodburn entrance out through the commuter parking lot.
- Create a new pick-up/drop-off area on South Greeley Avenue for children attending the Bell School:
  - o Add angled parking spaces (or a pull-over area if space is tight) in front of the Bell School ball field.
  - o Create a seating area for waiting children and parents between the parking spots and the ball field, or near the bus stop.
  - o Add shelter and benches at bus stops.



Angle Parking





Site 3: Chappaqua Train Station



Taxi Parking in front of Tracks



Taxi Stand and Waiting Area in front of Tracks - limited sidewalk





Pick-up Area in Front of Station



Memorial Plaza

### SITE 3: CHAPPAQUA TRAIN STATION

The Chappaqua Train Station is one of the busiest destinations in Chappaqua. In our survey, it was listed as the second top destination in downtown Chappaqua, though it serves as nothing more than a transit stop. There are few comfortable places to sit on the sidewalk by the pick-up/drop-off area or on the foot-bridge which is heated for colder months. In addition, sidewalks and clear pedestrian paths are lacking in the parking lots, forcing pedestrians to walk in traffic. The area in front of the station, a vast expanse of asphalt, is confusing for drivers to negotiate due to a lack of a center line and multiple turning options.

While the station functions adequately as a transit facility, it could serve as a fine venue for other activities. The handsome, restored station building and the adjacent Memorial Plaza are listed on the National Register of Historic places and are treasured by New Castle residents. These could be developed as destinations in their own right, especially on weekends when the station is not used as frequently. Workshop attendees also suggested ways that the station could provide more amenities for commuters.



Entrance to Overpass and Tracks



Bike Racks



Clear Drop-Off and Waiting Area



Sheltered Entrance & Waiting Area and Visible Cafe at Station



- Stripe the centerline in the streets through the parking lots to clarify traffic flow and lanes.
- Improve pedestrian experience:
  - o Stripe crosswalks and pedestrian areas in the parking lot.
  - o Extend a more pedestrian-friendly sidewalk through the South Lot.
  - o Install more lighting throughout all parking lots.
- Reduce the roadway in front of the station to expand waiting areas and stripe centerlines.
- Use the Memorial Plaza, the parking lot, and the station building for public events so that they become a center and destination for the community:
  - o Enhance Memorial Plaza by making it a community waiting area through better landscaping, reoriented and additional seating, improved sidewalks, and appropriate lighting.
- o Close the entrance to the circle for weekend activities, such as a Farmers' Market, Craft Fair, Trade Shows, etc. Invite vendors, artists and musicians to set up booths.
- o Use the station building in conjunction with events, creating a "hospitality hub" where event attendees can get information, take refuge during bad weather, grab coffee, and use the restroom.
- o Organize a drive-in movie theater in the South Lot.
- Provide attractive signage or information kiosk adjacent to the train station that provides wayfinding information, and information on resources, programming and events.







Site 4: Chappaqua Triangle



South Greeley Ave and Quaker Road



Narrow and long crosswalks on Route 120



#### SITE 4: CHAPPAQUA TRIANGLE

The intersection of South Greeley Avenue and Route 120/Quaker Road form what residents call the “Heart of Chappaqua”, a “Town Green” triangular park which highlights a principal gateway to downtown Chappaqua. Chappaqua residents have described a number of traffic and pedestrian issues at the Triangle:

- Congestion at the Hunts Lane intersection causes traffic to back up over the bridge, blocking the intersection, and likewise traffic backs up over the bridge during peak times due to drivers’ inability to turn onto S. Greeley: Level of Service at some peak hours at the Quaker Road and South Greeley intersection is “F.”
- Drivers turning north or south onto S. Greeley often fail to stop, creating potentially dangerous conflicts.
- Drivers turning left onto S. Greeley Ave. have a difficult time seeing oncoming traffic.
- Pedestrians have poor access to the Triangle and retail across the street due to a lack of crosswalks on S. Greeley.
- Roadways on all sides of the Triangle are wider than necessary at approximately 30’ and 40’, also preventing its use as a public space.
- The Triangle and its busy traffic create a gap along Chappaqua’s main commercial strip.



Congestion and Pedestrian Crossing at S. Greeley Ave.

We considered a few different options for this intersection: a T-intersection as recommended in the Vollmer report; a roundabout; and keeping it as an unsignaled Y-intersection. During conversations with representatives from New York State Department of Transportation, it was determined that a T-intersection would require a traffic signal and a roundabout would require a high retaining wall or major construction to decrease the slope to a manageable plane. Evaluating studies from the March 2003 Vollmer Comprehensive Plan for the Hamlet of Chappaqua, we found that the improvement in vehicular Level of Service (LOS) would not be significant with a signaled T intersection - it would remain LOS “F.”

The DOT is planning other improvements that could have a greater impact on LOS than reconfiguring the “Y.” There are currently plans to create a new turning lane at the intersection of Quaker Road and Hunts Place. This could alleviate congestion caused by school buses that cannot easily navigate the existing right turn. In addition, the DOT is adding an additional lane to the Quaker Bridge during its renovation which could further reduce congestion at the “Y.”



Entrance to Citibank Parking Lot



Chappaqua Triangle



Interactive Public Art



Sidewalk Art Exhibit and Sale



Information Kiosk



Sidewalk Extension at Pedestrian Crossing



Considering the changes required if the Triangle were reconfigured and the relatively minor gain along with the overwhelming community sentiment for keeping the Triangle, we recommend keeping the Triangle and its Y-configuration. The majority of citizens surveyed and workshop participants agreed that the Triangle is an attractive and important feature of the Town. Keeping the Triangle maintains the Town Green as a focal point of the downtown, and avoids the use of a traffic light or an oppressive retaining wall.

While we recommend keeping the Triangle, certain items still need to be addressed. The Triangle needs reinforcement as a usable Town Green. The goal is to create a more active and accessible space that will help to knit S. Greeley as the main commercial street back together. Workshop participants suggested:

- Enhance the Triangle as a Gateway into downtown Chappaqua:
  - o Increase the amount of green by decreasing the width of the surrounding roadways.
  - o Develop the center of the Triangle as a usable passive park and gathering space with a seating area, planters, and a water feature as a focal point.
  - o Increase sidewalk width and remove parking along the base of the Triangle on South Greeley to improve visibility.
  - o Enhance the focal point of the Triangle with a structure, a more striking flagpole, and/or a more formal community notice board.
- Use the extra lane built during the bridge reconstruction as a right turn lane and use the current lane as the left turn stacking lane.
- Improve flow to surrounding streets by changing the access to the Citibank parking area:
  - o Change the Woodburn Avenue access to “enter only” so that traffic exits through the commuter parking lot.
  - o Close the Citibank driveway entrance from the Bridge.
  - o Enforce “No Standing” rules in the roadway behind Citibank.
- Increase public space and improve pedestrian crossings:
  - o Narrow roadways on all sides of the Triangle to the NYSDOT lane width minimum. of 12’.
  - o Stripe wide crosswalks crossing the legs of the Triangle.
- Add a stop sign and crosswalk at the northern tip of the Triangle to improve the safety of the intersection and allow for pedestrian crossings.



Gateway Arch



Wayfinding Signage





Site 5: Greeley Avenue and King Street





Looking Down South Greeley Ave.



Difficult Pedestrian Crossing on King St.



Southeast corner of South Greeley Ave. and King St.

## SITE 5: INTERSECTION OF GREELEY AVENUE AND KING STREET

This intersection in the heart of the downtown should allow safe pedestrian crossings from every corner to improve connectivity and access to businesses. Currently, the intersection is confusing and unsafe for both drivers and pedestrians. Through our time lapse and on-site observations, it was apparent that drivers are confused at the bottom of King Street where they stop even though there is no stop sign. We also observed a considerable amount of jaywalking across South Greeley where there is no crosswalk. With traffic and crossing issues resolved, this area has real potential for becoming a new great community gathering place. There already is a nice shaded space on the southeast corner that can be expanded into a lovely outdoor seating area. Workshop participants suggested that this would be a great place to sit and have coffee, or provide outdoor seating for a restaurant at the corner.



Officer Green directing Traffic



Pedestrian Alley to South Greeley Ave.



Information Kiosk



sidewalks Extension with  
Variety of Uses





- Remove the island and keep the stop sign for both drivers turning right and continuing straight, expanding the outdoor space at the corner as a pocket park with seating and an information kiosk. Keep a northbound right-turn lane on Greeley.
- Create a 3-way stop by adding a stop sign to the bottom of Upper King Street.
- Extend sidewalks at corners where it does not interfere with turning radii of buses and trucks.
- Add benches to bus stop areas.
- Extend the downtown pedestrian corridor treatment all the way to the Post Office
  - o Wider sidewalks, lighting treatment, wayfinding and informational signage, and landscaping.
- Consider a new mixed-use development with retail on the ground floor and a parking lot behind in the parking lot across from Susan Lawrence Catering.



Sidewalk extension with Landscaping





Site 6: Upper King Street



Grappolo Outdoor Cafe



Crossing King Street



## SITE 6: UPPER KING STREET

Upper King Street is an extension of downtown Chappaqua, but cannot maintain the feel of a downtown commercial district past the Horace Greeley House because of the steep slope of the hill and the predominantly residential character. While intermittent commercial uses extend up to the Crown House and resume at the Talbots Shopping Center at the crest of the hill, it is difficult to walk up the hill due to narrow or non-existent sidewalks. A lack of crosswalks also makes it difficult to access upper King Street businesses.

Workshop attendees expressed that there is great public space opportunity at the intersection of Senter St. and King St. Currently there is an unnecessarily large amount of roadway that takes away from potential usable space in front of the Community Center, Grappolo, and the Horace Greeley House. Chappaqua residents desire an expanded outdoor cafe and other pedestrian space for these attractions, as evidenced by workshop and survey results.



Small Outdoor Plazas with Focal Points

- Enhance the top of Upper King St. by the Talbots Shopping Center making it another gateway to downtown Chappaqua
  - o Draw pedestrian and driver attention to when/where they are entering or leaving downtown Chappaqua with banners or signs to signify the entrance to a business district.
- Extend the downtown pedestrian sidewalk treatment all the way to the Talbots Shopping Center
  - o Wider sidewalks, pedestrian lighting, wayfinding and informational signage, and landscaping.
- Expand the existing outdoor spaces, reinforcing comfortable places to sit, wait, eat, and read outdoors and connecting the Horace Greeley House to activities in the downtown and on the opposite side of King St.:
  - o Provide crosswalks across King St. at Senter St. and across Senter St.
  - o Decrease crossing distance and create a small plaza in front of the Greeley House by reducing roadway and widening sidewalks.
  - o Extend the outdoor cafe in front of Grappolo to the front of the Community Center creating an outdoor seating area for Community Center visitors.







# OVERALL RECOMMENDATIONS

## LIGHTING

During the evening workshop it became abundantly clear that the lighting in the downtown is not adequate. Participants remarked that it is difficult to cross streets safely and to negotiate the deteriorated sidewalks. It is also difficult to tell if there is life (social and commercial) in the village as most storefronts are dark. The poor lighting gives the impression that the downtown is asleep and inactive, reducing any desire to venture forth in the evening. Improved lighting will increase the feeling of safety by highlighting activity and life in the downtown.

- Increase lighting levels to highlight pedestrian faces and storefronts.
- Provide pedestrian-scale, historic-style lighting similar to the lights on the historic bridge, either on the sidewalks or as sconces on buildings.
- Require storefront display lighting, while discouraging neon signs.
- Encourage existing businesses to install sign awnings lit by goose-neck lights (rather than back-lit awnings).
- Employ a lighting specialist to assess lighting levels needed and propose a uniform lighting plan for sidewalks and streets, keeping in mind:
  - o The lighting plan should not allow low-pressure sodium lighting, cobra-heads or overly bright fixtures.
  - o Fixtures should be shielded to reduce glare above and meet “dark sky” guidelines.
  - o Use energy-efficient fixtures.
- Historic lighting throughout the downtown, from the Town Hall to the Post Office, to the train station and up the hill to the Talbots Shopping Center will help to tie the entire downtown together and improve walkability.

## SIDEWALKS

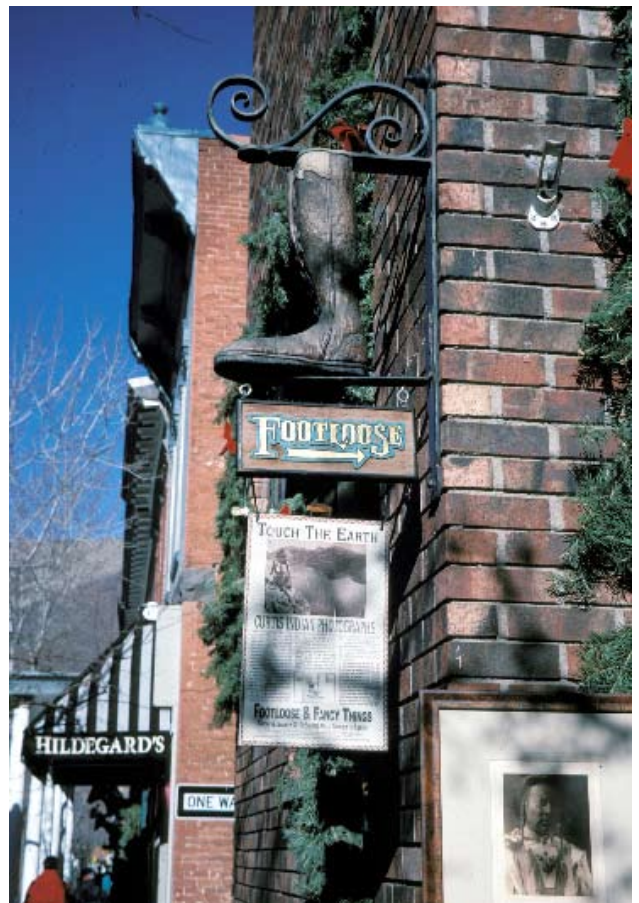
To encourage more people to walk in the downtown and to the train station, workshop participants agreed that the sidewalks should be widened where possible and an ongoing maintenance program should be established. Many stretches are broken, cracked, and dirty, and not all of them are American Disability Association (ADA) compliant (with curb ramps). In

many areas, they are just wide enough for a stroller to pass, but barely wide enough for two people to walk side-by-side.

The Town of New Castle has invested in new sidewalks along Route 120 on the west side of the Saw Mill Parkway, and it is planning to build new trails that will enable residents to safely walk into the downtown from the surrounding neighborhoods. These efforts to improve walkability should be extended into the downtown with new, wider sidewalks that extend from Town Hall to the Post Office, and up King Street to the Talbots Shopping Center.

Chappaqua sidewalk maintenance is currently the legal responsibility of property owners. However, in many downtowns, in order to create a uniform appearance and a consistent maintenance program, the sidewalks are constructed and maintained by the municipality, and the property owners are assessed on a pro rata basis.

- Create a walkable downtown with consistent sidewalk treatment:
  - o Connect the commercial core of Chappaqua to the Town Hall, the Post Office, the train station and up King Street to the Talbots Shopping Center.
  - o Develop a uniform appearance with a consistent concrete or paving material.
  - o Widen sidewalks where roadways allow.
- Conduct short-term experiments that will lead to permanent curb extensions at corners and crosswalks to calm traffic and shorten walking distances.
- Clarify responsibility for sidewalk maintenance so that an improvement program can be developed under the Town of New Castle or a newly formed Business Improvement District.
- The Town should make sidewalk improvements and maintain them on a routine basis, and assess property owners for the cost on a pro rata basis.
- The Town should pressure wash all sidewalks, curbs and streets on a yearly basis with particular care around dumpsters and garbage cans.





## SIGNAGE AND FACADES

A commonly heard complaint about the downtown was the lack of informational and way-finding signage, as well as pedestrian-oriented commercial signage. In addition, many felt that storefronts and facades were visually unappealing and poorly maintained. Business owners said that the town signage ordinance, in restricting signage perpendicular to the streets, prevented them from promoting their stores as effectively as possible.

- Enforce existing sign regulations, e.g. stores must replace signage and wording that is larger than permitted.
- Revise and expand the signage ordinance, and enforce local business adherence to the regulations:
  - o Allow perpendicular store signage (effective for pedestrians)
  - o Promote historic-type signage (no large neon signs)
  - o Reduce promotional signage (temporary notices, etc.) that clutters windows and restrict its use to select areas
  - o Enforce sign maintenance
- Provide more informational signage throughout the downtown so that destinations are clearly marked, historic information is available, events are advertised and town resources are emphasized.
- Encourage or facilitate those with broken, faded or awnings to replace them and those without to add awnings:
  - o A BID or a coalition of businesses could commission a single awning company at a discount bulk rate to update or replace awnings and/or sign awnings.
  - o While total uniformity is not the goal, some consistency in size and pattern could provide shade while making storefronts more visually appealing.
- Establish storefront and façade guidelines to improve maintenance and provide consistency in new storefront designs.
- Encourage storefront displays and lighting to make storefronts appealing throughout the downtown.





Outdoor Art Gallery



## LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION AND MAINTENANCE

While residents felt that a few select areas in downtown Chappaqua were beautifully enhanced by trees and landscaping, and well-maintained by individual store owners, the Chappaqua Garden Club or the Town, they suggested that such treatment should be employed throughout the downtown to brighten its atmosphere. Many residents desired more street trees in the downtown, but above-ground utility cables and narrow sidewalks restrict the planting of trees along many sidewalks. It was also observed that unattractive, disorderly trash dumpsters were in plain sight in Chappaqua. Trash removal is not uniformly conducted in the downtown, and trash removal companies often leave a mess behind.

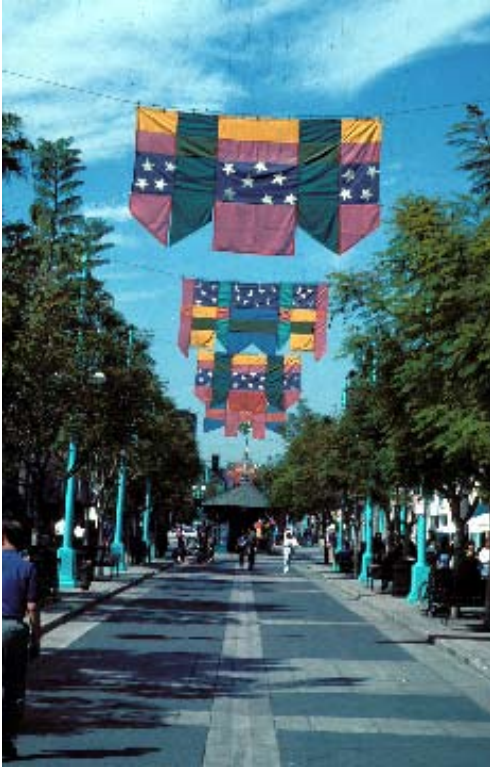
- Increase planting in the downtown, especially at corner curb extensions where flowers, shade trees and benches could be added as pedestrian amenities.



- Line downtown streets with trees where possible and use clusters of shade trees to create pleasant places to sit at key locations, such as sidewalk extensions.
- Enforce better upkeep of flower beds and planters with the help of downtown business owners (or a BID) and the Chappaqua Garden Club.
- Organize art projects, such as community tile projects, mosaic seating areas and murals to brighten blank walls and empty alleys. For example, local art students could paint murals in the alleys and in the redesigned pocket park next to Susan Lawrence Catering.
- Screen dumpsters in the downtown and parking areas with fences or landscaping.
- Ensure consistent trash pick-up and enforce cleanliness in dumpster areas
  - A BID could encourage all businesses to use the same company, which could provide a discounted rate.
- Bury utility wires and infrastructure so they do not continue to detract from the downtown, specifically the utilities interfering with the views surrounding the Triangle. While this is an expensive job, it could be a long-term goal.



Dumpster Screening



## **STEPS TO FORMING A BID, EXCERPT FROM “STARTING A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT: A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE”**

### **PHASE 1**

- Contact the Department of Small Business Services (SBS)
- Determine Whether or Not to Form a BID
- Form a Steering Committee
- Hold an Initial Steering Committee Meeting
- Develop a Database of Property Owners and Commercial Tenants
- Conduct a Needs Assessment Survey
- Draft the District Plan

### **PHASE 2**

- Send Out First Informational Mailing
- Hold First Public Meeting
- Hold Second Public Meeting
- Document Results of Support Gathering

### **PHASE 3**

- Legislative Authorization

[http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid\\_guide\\_complete.pdf](http://www.nyc.gov/html/sbs/downloads/pdf/bid_guide_complete.pdf)



## ESTABLISHING A BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Given the needs of the downtown – physical improvements such as lighting, sidewalks and facades, and business development activities such as promotion and event programming – the creation of a Business Improvement District (BID) might be an appropriate solution. A BID is a commercial district that agrees to tax itself in order to supplement services provided by the municipality, to pay for common improvements that the public sector is unable to provide, or to provide management to promote and activate the district. The assessments are mandatory and are collected by the municipality on behalf of the district. BIDs are typically involved in the following services:

- Capital improvements: installing pedestrian-scale lighting and street furniture; planting trees and shrubbery; widening sidewalks, etc.
- Retail promotion: producing festivals and events; coordinating sales promotions; producing maps and newsletters.
- Economic Development: offering incentives to new and expanding businesses; re-evaluating zoning to promote more retail; business recruitment.



- Maintenance: collecting trash; removing litter and graffiti; washing sidewalks; shoveling snow; trimming trees; maintaining landscaping.
- Parking and Transportation: managing public parking systems; maintaining transit shelters; managing shared parking agreements amongst businesses.
- Public Space Regulation: managing sidewalk vending; controlling vehicle loading.

While most activities are funded by self-assessments, other sources of revenue include voluntary donations, federal or state subsidies, local government funds, and revenues from sold goods and services, event sponsorships and grants.

The majority of BIDs are operated by nonprofit organizations, while some are run by public/non-profit partnerships, and a smaller number by public sector bodies or agencies. In general the smaller the community the more likely the BID is run by a public agency. Most BIDs employ few full-time personnel and especially in small communities, the BID-manager often serves in a part-time capacity.

While the Chamber of Commerce and/or Chappaqua Millwood Business Association can undertake some of the activities, such as advertising and special events, the advantage of a BID is the revenue it is able to generate and the mandatory participation of all property owners in the district. Many small downtowns, however, can not muster the required support to form a BID. In these cases, the municipality can step in to begin to assess property owners for common benefits. Chappaqua, for example, already has a parking district to which property owners are required to contribute to help maintain the municipal parking lots used by shoppers. A program for sidewalk improvements, new lighting, trash pick-up and other downtown-wide enhancements could be similarly established through legislation, and a BID could later assume these responsibilities.







## INFILL DEVELOPMENT

Many workshop participants mentioned the need for infill development in the downtown to fill gaps and create a continuous retail corridor. For example, the sporadic existence of retail on upper King Street, and the inconsistency of retail on North Greeley Avenue could be remedied to increase retail uses and visual connectivity throughout the downtown. Other participants suggested new parking structures or decks with mixed-use or retail “wrappers” on the streets. Several sites in the downtown could be redeveloped so that there is a more continuous feel to the village.

- Encourage redevelopment of residential sites on North Greeley Avenue (north of King St. intersection) as mixed-use buildings with retail on the ground floor and residential above.
- Expand the Citibank building to a height of 3-stories to improve the vista (instead of looking down at roofs of 1-story buildings) coming over the Route 120 bridge into Town - maintain commercial uses on the ground floor and add office or residential use above, with a possible parking deck behind
  - o Consider eliminating the setback so that the building frontage is along the property line and the sidewalk is in keeping with the pedestrian corridor design.
- Consider amending the zoning in the downtown to prohibit automotive uses thus encouraging the redevelopment of the gas station site on South Greeley in the future.
- Consider parking decks fronted by mixed-use buildings in the commuter lot, the municipal lot across from Susan Lawrence and the lot adjacent to the Bell School ball fields.



Parking structures lined with retail





# FUTURE STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

The aforementioned recommendations will help downtown Chappaqua realize its full potential. As Chappaqua begins to evolve into a more vibrant retail destination, other issues, such as increased demand for parking and residential uses, should be studied.

## PARKING

Residents and businesses expressed the need for more shopper parking in downtown Chappaqua. In addition, an increase in Metro-North ridership may necessitate more commuter parking in the future if commuters continue to drive to the station. (Many communities are introducing shuttle services to reduce the need for more parking.) Business employees continue to park on the street or in lots close to their businesses because there is no incentive to park in remote lots. A task force should be created to evaluate parking opportunities in downtown Chappaqua with the assistance of parking consultants. The task force would conduct the following studies:

- Parking turnover studies on streets and in municipal lots to evaluate need for remote employee parking.
- Consolidating downtown employee parking in remote lots, freeing up centrally located parking spaces for shoppers.
- Reconfiguration of municipal parking lots to increase the number of spaces while adding landscaping and sidewalks to the lots.
- Reinstitution of a commuter shuttle service - Chappaqua has provided this service in the past, but found it unsuccessful. Given community response during this process, the shuttle service, supported by more advertising and advocacy, may be reconsidered.
- Cost-benefit analysis of new parking structures lined with retail and/or multi-family housing:
  - o Creation of retail- or residential-lined parking structure on the south parking lot at the train station.
  - o Creation of retail-lined parking structure on parking lot across from Susan Lawrence Catering.
  - o Elevation of Bell School ball fields with retail-lined parking structure underneath.
  - o Conduct a redevelopment study for Downtown Upholstery Inc. (126 King St.) to determine whether its expansive lot would be better as a different non-retail use or retail plus public-parking use.



Performing Arts Center Alternative



## PERFORMING ARTS CENTER

There is also a great opportunity to create a Performing Arts Center as an anchor destination for Chappaqua. There are several potential locations for this destination. However, in keeping with the community's desire to activate, draw people to downtown Chappaqua and extend the downtown towards the Civic Center, the steering committee and PPS discussed in some detail transforming the Civic Center into a Performing Arts Civic Center (PACC). The location, architectural design, and extensive programming will require further study. One potential scenario is the following:

The Police Department, now located in the Town Hall, is planning to expand by either building an addition or a new building. The Town could construct a new building that would house the town hall functions and a new performing arts center, while the Police Department expands within the current Town Hall. The new building could face the plaza while also creating a backdrop for outdoor concerts and performances in the Recreation Field, replacing the seldom-used gazebo. The PACC would attract visitors from nearby towns and villages and provide residents more reason to enjoy being downtown.





Short-term Parking Lot "Screening"



Temporary Sidewalk Extensions





# NEXT STEPS

Bringing about many of the changes to realize the Town's vision of a vibrant downtown and bustling business district will require sustained work over a long period of time. However, many steps can be taken in the short-term (within six months) that can begin to make a big difference right away and prepare for the longer-term projects. An important next step for the Town is to decide who will address certain recommendations and which ones should be targeted as short-term goals. These short-term goals should be low-cost and should produce results that show the community that the Town of New Castle is intent on bringing the residents' vision to fruition. This will help to build enthusiasm and sustain momentum for the implementation of the long-term vision.

Long-term goals are just as important, if not more so. They require more time, energy, and commitment in creating the necessary connections and networks and project management goals. Creating connections and networks are steps that need to be taken in the near future to put Chappaqua on the path to achieving the larger long-term goal.



- Since New York State DOT is reconstructing the Quaker Street Bridge (in the next year), it would be a good time to partner with them to begin work on the pedestrian improvements along Route 120 (North Greeley and King Street). Contact DOT, Westchester County Department of Transportation (WCDOT), and traffic consultants to discuss:
  - o Continuing the new lane on the bridge for use as a right-turn lane at the Y-intersection of Route 120 and North Greeley.
  - o Discuss stops signs, crosswalks, and sidewalks along Route 120 and on North and South Greeley Avenues.
  - o Begin traffic-calming experiments on South and North Greeley Avenues: use temporary bollards and striping to test curb extensions.
- Hire a lighting engineer and/or consultant to determine what lighting to use throughout the downtown.
- Undertake parking study.
- Form strategic partnerships to help to increase the amount of programming in the downtown right away.
- Step up beautification efforts with more flower pots, hanging pots, window boxes.
- Contact the International Downtown Association ([www.ida-downtown.org](http://www.ida-downtown.org)) to obtain information on how to organize and set up a Business Improvement District (BID) Also contact the American Independent Business Alliance ([www.amiba.net](http://www.amiba.net)) for comparison.

---

Downtown Chappaqua is ripe for a community-driven revitalization effort. The Placemaking process that took place over the past year gives the Town of New Castle and Chappaqua the resources and guidelines for achieving the community's vision.

It is with strong commitment from the Town and from the entire community, including but not limited to businesses, citizens, and the School Board, that downtown Chappaqua will become the envisioned socially vibrant and economically bustling village center.





## APPENDIX

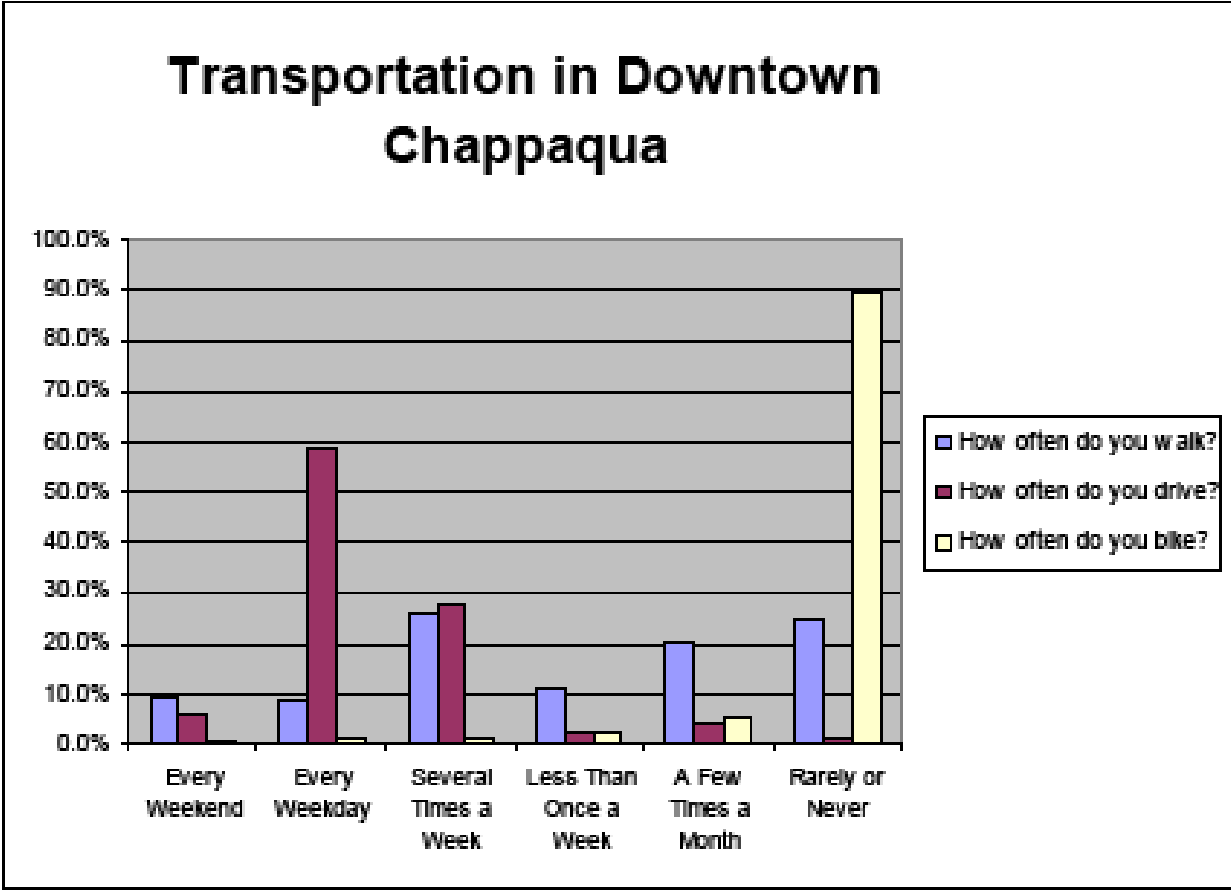
[illegible]

[Redacted text]

[Redacted text]

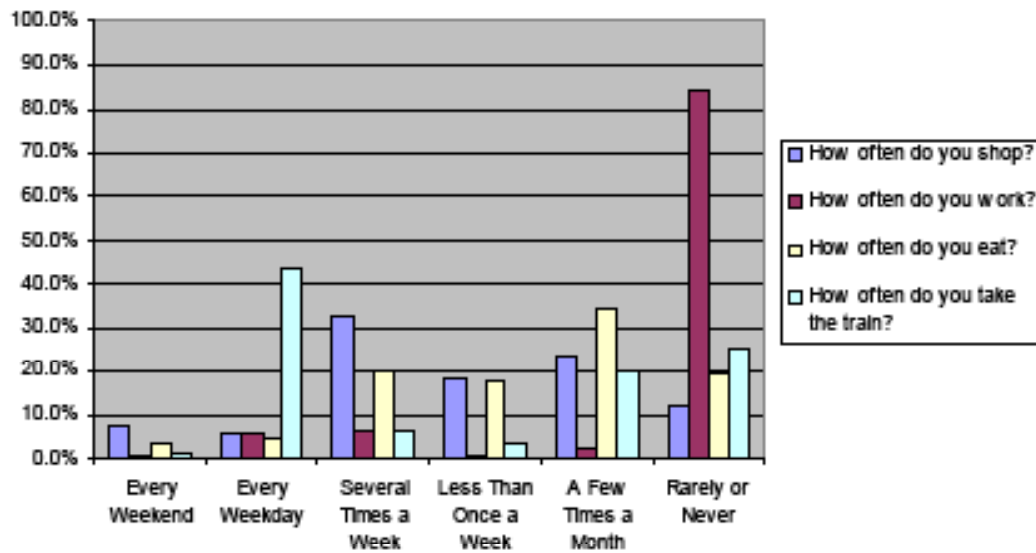
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]
[Redacted]	[Redacted]

[Redacted text]

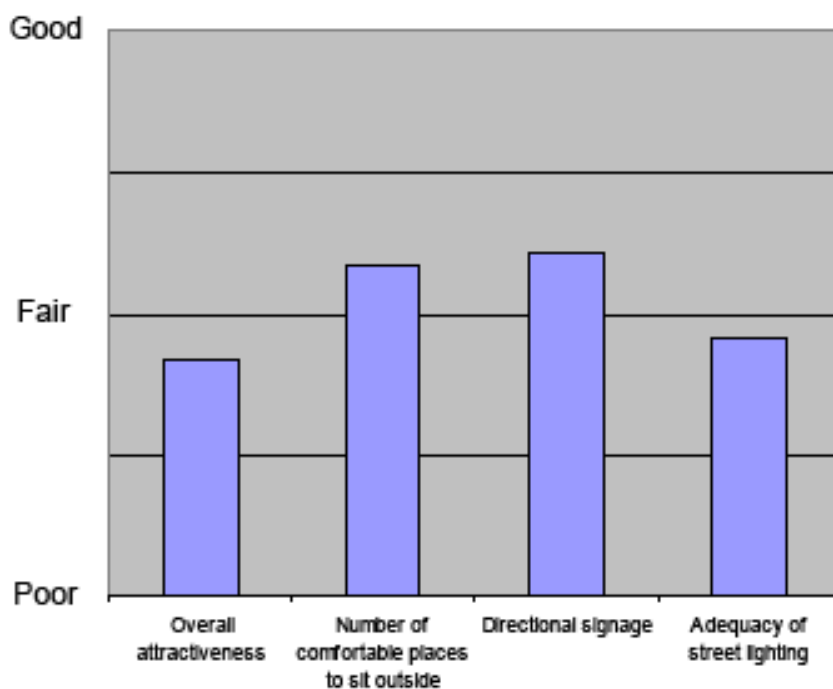


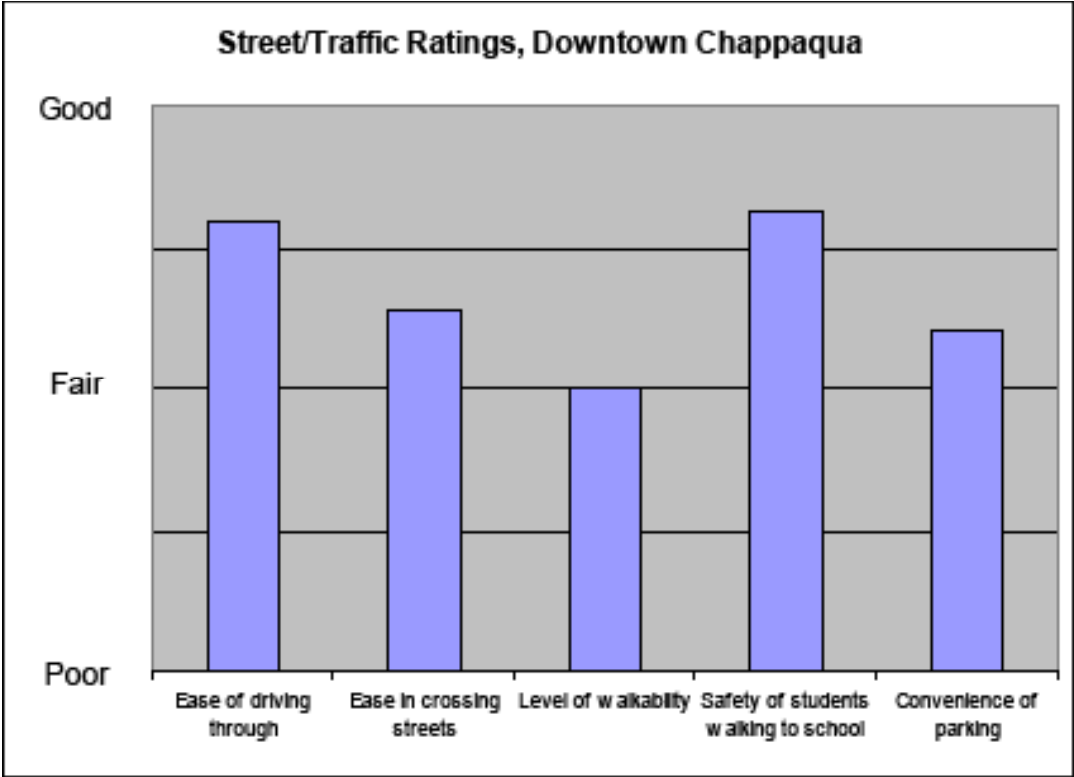


## Activities in Downtown Chappaqua



## Amenities Ratings, Downtown Chappaqua







[illegible]

[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	
[REDACTED]	

--	--	--

[illegible]

\_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]
  - [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- |              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |
| ■ [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] |

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]

- [REDACTED]



## RETAILER SURVEYS RESULTS

### HOURS

Many retailers close at 5:00 or 5:30 and miss the evening commuters. Could be more consistently open to 6:00 and maybe later one evening a week (Thursday)

### CUSTOMERS

Mostly New Castle, although some mention Northern Westchester clientele. Many said they would like to see Chappaqua become more of a shopping destination to attract customers from outside town.

### RATINGS

Good: flowers and landscaping

Average: attractiveness, general cleanliness, lighting, places to sit, location of parking, ease of getting around without car, variety of downtown events

Poor: availability of parking, variety of stores and services

### LIKE BEST

Small town feel, location and access to transportation, friendly people

## PRIMARY CONCERNS

Stores going out of business (in part because of high rents)

Rundown look of facades and storefronts

Too many offices and banks on ground floor

Traffic

Poor mix of stores

## IMPROVEMENTS

Better and wider sidewalks, more pedestrian-friendly environment

Better outdoor seating

Historic streetlights

Better garbage pick-up and use town garbage containers

Reduce traffic

More parking

Improve storefronts and facades

Short-term parking enforcement for quick turnover

Connect upper King Street with wider sidewalks and consistent landscape

## EVENTS

Stay open late Thursday nights

Sidewalk sales and seasonal sidewalk displays

Farmers Market

## DOWNTOWN CHAPPAQUA WORKSHOP 1 & 2 SUMMARY

Approximately 100 people met in the Fall of 2006 over the span of two workshops to discuss their ideas for making downtown Chappaqua a safe destination for both pedestrians and vehicles and place of great activity. Project for Public Spaces facilitated these public Placemaking Workshops, which was sponsored by the Town of New Castle. Participants evaluated downtown Chappaqua in six different groups, each group looking at a small area using the Place Performance Evaluation form. Groups focused on what types of activities and destinations would draw people to their site, what could be done to improve pedestrian and vehicular circulation, and also what would reinforce downtown Chappaqua as the heart of New Castle – what would make it a great downtown.



The following notes are summarized from the workshop groups who evaluated the following sites: In addition to evaluating specific sites, each workshop group identified the character and the opportunities of the entire area of downtown Chappaqua. They liked the quaint, charming, small town feeling of Chappaqua and would like for this character to be more evident and prominent in the downtown. With this overall vision, the current assets of Chappaqua, and the proposed improvements, downtown Chappaqua would feel more like an extension of the home and more like the center and community destination of Chappaqua.

The current assets (What do you like best about this place?) include Chappaqua's:

- Great potential
- Good for commuters, Accessible to train station
- Architecturally inviting
  - o Library, Bell School
  - o Historical preserved restoration
  - o Cute gas station (could be cuter)
  - o the curved shape of Citigroup building
  - o Historic, beautiful train station with a great location
  - o Intersection of Greeley and Quaker as the welcoming gateway to town – visual focal point, center of town, community bulletin board, a place to sit
  - o Gazebo
- Signage
  - o Bell School sign – could be nicer
  - o Flagpole (but better)
- Available, open space
  - o Gorgeous, comfortable, clean
  - o Green Spaces: Park, Natural Streams, Wetlands, The Green, Trees all over (but maybe prune)
  - o Scale of triangle
  - o Pocket Park by Horace Greeley House
    - Nice place to sit
    - Only green space
    - New patio: only refuge
  - o Abundance of green spaces – the pocket park on north side of King on Greeley, the trees in/near the triangle, the stream
- Pedestrian space
  - o Good crosswalks at Woodburn and Greeley intersection
  - o Wide sidewalk (Giona's)
  - o Setbacks (Giona's and @ dry cleaners)
  - o the wide sidewalks, trees, character on King st, east side by Family Britches and Bagel shop



- Compactness – Businesses, Variety of commercial spaces, downtown of independent stores
    - o Pizza Station + Dunkin Donuts attract mixed ages, busy day + evenings
    - o Tables at Pizza Station
    - o Tables in front of Takayama and Le Jardin
    - o Susan Lawrence outdoor dining and landscape
    - o Barry's storefront and flowerbeds and bench
    - o Sconces @ Great Stuff
    - o Dry cleaner: Pots of plants and wide sidewalk
    - o Civic functionality;
    - o ball fields, dry cleaners, banks, school, library
    - o Amount of youth activities
  - Parking
    - o Street parking
      - On-street parking on the east side of South Greeley Ave. (west side parking, negative)
    - o Angled parking on lower King (could back in)
  - Bus stop
  - Small town feel, Hamlet quality, Quaker feel
    - o Community center
    - o Horace Greeley House
    - o Spirited events (community day, sales, Halloween, etc.)
    - o Officer Green – traffic enforcer, a placemaker!
  - More amenities for older population (empty nesters, seniors)
  - Adoption of a downtown district code to determine signage, graphics, landscape, (distinctive) lighting, and storefront facades
  - Retail friendly - Needs to be real commercial center with more retail
    - o More diverse stores
      - a better mix of stores
      - international
    - o a book store to center of town (move Second Story books)
    - o Increased mix of uses – 2nd floor offices, 1st floor retail, 3rd floor residential;
    - o Outdoor dining, Sidewalk cafes, plazas
    - o More restaurants
      - Greater variety of food – more moderately priced restaurants, hot dog stand, vendors, Carolyn's Tea House (Peekskill), food kiosks, ice cream
    - o Beautify Allen Place dumpsters
    - o A Business Improvement District;
  - Improvement of the downtown's pedestrian-, pet- and bicycle-friendliness;
    - o Creation of a pedestrian downtown;
  - Traffic destroying character
    - o Obey speed laws
    - o Use your blinker
    - o Move commuter traffic out of center of town
    - o Limited-to-no truck traffic;
    - o Removal of school bus traffic;
    - o Curbcut on island intersection at Greeley + King + 120
    - o Eliminate pedestrian right-of-way signs
    - o Eliminate stretch of 120 along triangle – bridge; reconfigure traffic flow (could be trial run)
    - o Shave sidewalk outside Nice Stuff to increase traffic flow north and north-east up 120, to extend right turn lane
- The proposed improvements to the entire area of downtown Chappaqua (How would you improve the overall identity and character of downtown Chappaqua?) include:
- Make it a people place
  - Gateway to town
    - o Physical center
    - o Communication center
    - o Town green – place where people protest

- o Re-direction of traffic from the downtown during peak hours, perhaps through redirection of Route 120 traffic to Route 117; and
- o Make King Street by Village Market 2-way traffic with parallel parking
- o Reversed direction of Lower King St.

Activities and elements that participants would like to do and have in downtown Chappaqua (What activities would you like to do in downtown Chappaqua that you can't do now?) include:

- Places to sit, congregate, and meet people
  - o Cluster seating to promote friendly socializing
  - o out in relaxed environment like you're on vacation, not just in front of restaurants
  - o More small gardens to sit in like Le Jardin (beautiful space)
  - o A kiosk with community notices;
- Entertainment – more music and arts
  - o a performance space, bands at gazebo, a jazz club, a movie theatre
  - o Dancing, dancing under lights
  - o Music indoors and out
  - o Movie outdoors
  - o Movie Theater
  - o Video Rental
  - o A nightlife – dancing, a biker bar
- Activities
  - o Art programs
  - o Chess tournament
  - o Have “family night” every week at local restaurants
  - o Stuff for kids
  - o Teen center (old fire house)
  - o A community farm/garden;
  - o More activities for High School students – basketball, movie nights at the community center, bands at the community center;
- o A community center for high school kids – run by students, maybe with some college students as “adults”;
  - More spaces for children – playgrounds, child-friendly restaurants, small parks; and
  - Exercise and recreational amenities
    - o Pool
    - o Health Club
    - o Basketball Courts
    - o Bike Paths
    - o More physical activities – swimming, bowling, paintball in the woods behind Senter St. field;
  - More parking

Models that participants felt would be good for downtown Chappaqua (What are good models for downtown Chappaqua and why do you like them?) include:

- Bronxville – integration of train station and higher density housing, people living downtown
- Hastings
- Katonah
  - o Stores are inviting, Each store has its own character
  - o Trees, planters
  - o Nice outdoors, benches, decorations
  - o flow of traffic
- Millbrook, NY
- Mt. Kisco – Flying Pig, back of stores
- Pleasantville - Farmers' Market
- Rhinebeck, NY
- Rye
  - o Limits certain types of commercial uses
- Greenwich, CT
- Madison, CT
- New Canaan, CT
  - o Pedestrian friendly
  - o Walk from lots through town
  - o Easy to get in and out



- Ridgefield, CT – walking town
- Camden, ME
  - o Small-town feel
  - o Wood buildings
  - o Small streets
  - o Good mix of residential and commercial
- Plaza Major, Madrid
- Koh Tao, Thailand

Through participants' brainstorming, a list of potential partnerships was created. What local partnerships or local talent can you identify that could help implement some of your proposed improvements? They include:

- DOT
- Buses – transit (Joan);
- School bus company;
- Metro North
- Police/Fire
- Waste department;
- Board of “trustees” (look at big picture)
- Make sure boards talk to each other or have ambassadors
- Local chamber of commerce
- Town
- School board
- High School student government;
- Student representatives – teens & kids;
- Business owners/merchants
- Historical Society;
- Community Kitchen;
- Landlords
- Future BID
- Residents
- Kids and teens
- Garden club
- Chappaqua Beautification Committee;
- Chappaqua Arts Council;
- Rotary club

- Library;
- Churches

When evaluating their specific sites, groups identified short-term and long-term improvements.

List ideas that you would do to improve this place that could be done right away and that wouldn't cost a lot. And What changes would you make in the long term that would have the biggest impact?

## SITE 1

Summary: Site 1 envisioned downtown Chappaqua as a livelier, more diverse space, safer for pedestrians and people of all ages. The site itself will become more civically functional through improved connections from downtown Chappaqua down to that end of South Greeley Ave. These improvements would not only cater to pedestrians and people of all ages, but also to local businesses and the small town character of Chappaqua.

### Short Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Widen sidewalks – Bell side
  - o Better maintenance of sidewalks
  - o More crosswalks
    - Library to town hall
  - o Pick-up area at Bell School
  - o Traffic calming
  - o Access to gazebo
  - o Link spaces
- Amenities
  - o Library
    - Café
    - Kiosk
    - Seating
    - Lights at night
    - Better promotion of events
  - o Benches- ensure utilization
  - o Moveable café
  - o Landscape maintenance/pruning

- o Sculpture/art @ town hall
- o Signage
- o Better lighting
- o Fencing, improve (to improve view/access) or remove by gazebo
- Activities
  - o Increase usage
  - o Create more events esp. for gazebo
    - Dancing, movies, farmers' market, art exhibits
  - o Exercise program to encourage pedestrian traffic from library to downtown
    - E.g. distance markers
- Business
  - o Vendors, partnering with existing downtown businesses

#### Long Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Walking Bridges
  - o Sidewalks across front lawn of town hall from street towards back
  - o Roundabouts with center fountains
  - o Centralize Parking
  - o More parking, possibly on smith street
  - o Multi-story parking garage in the south lot of train station
- Amenities
  - o Move playground in between library and St. Mary's, will connect to town
  - o Sculpture with steps
  - o Plaza with steps in front of town hall
  - o Underground utilities
  - o Jitney service
- Activities
  - o Utilize, accentuate presence of Stream
  - o Splash pad, water park, water feature
  - o More playing fields
- Business
  - o Retail space in front of Bell School
    - Between parking lots
  - o Turn Bell school into condos
  - o Town hall - more space for police dept.
    - Maybe move rec. dept to old fire house
    - But where to put antique truck and other current uses in fire house?
  - o Zone storefronts as retail
  - o Create BID
  - o No franchises

#### SITE 2

Summary: Group 2 envisioned downtown Chappaqua and its site as a charming place for all its residents – those in cars, those on foot, and those on bikes. As an extension of the home, the downtown would be a place where people of all ages could go for activities and events and hang out with Officer Green.

#### Short Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Improve sidewalks (including curb cuts)
  - o Widen sidewalks east of South Greeley
  - o widen crosswalks
  - o trial 4-way stop sign
  - o extending Officer Green hours
    - i.e. Saturday during soccer games
  - o Slow down traffic
  - o Bump outs where practical (Bank of America corner)
  - o Better traffic flow
  - o spruce up/reconfigure parking behind Bank of America
    - dumpsters are eyesores, angled parking is messy
  - o add signage – “no left turn” behind Pizza Station
  - o Stop sign + center line + street signage for Woodburn and Bank of America
  - o Reconfigure parking behind Dunkin Donuts
  - o Eliminate entrance off Greeley – extend sidewalk (something for kids, seating, planting, etc...)



- o Remove entrance from Woodburn + median
- o 90 degree right turn by triangle so folks will STOP coinciding with bump-outs by Citibank  
Eliminate turn lane on South Greeley – across street bump out on Bank of America corner – make parking on East side of South Greeley back-in angle parking
- o give people incentives to park in back parking lot by metering on street parking
  - not-metered in back lot
  - not all agreed
- Amenities
  - o Fix rail fence, align + adjust signage
  - o More attractive planting (gas station, Pizza Station)
  - o Better, more attractive lighting
    - Decorative lights on east side of South Greeley
  - o Heaters for cool weather
  - o Artworks in alleyways + on brick walls (e.g. kids' projects, murals)
  - o Create something on the Bell field corner (student run café or vendor?)
  - o Cut-out planters in the sidewalks
  - o More attractive clock on Bank of America wall
  - o Flower and newspaper vendors (Woodburn + Greeley)
  - o Beautify dumpsters behind South Greeley shops
  - o take out one parking space at Bank of America
    - add more seating, planters
    - make it more of a meeting place, gathering spot
- Activities
- Business
  - o create BID

#### Long Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Ramp (2-lanes) off bridge – station parking lot (see drawing)
  - o Drop off spot on bridge by stairs to RR station
  - o Behind stores east side of Greeley – elevate parking lot and fields, parking underneath. (promenade here?)
  - o Put in a traffic light (blinking during off hours)
  - o manage traffic flow
    - four way stop is first step, then maybe light or maybe keep Officer Green (comment from audience – how about a roundabout?)
  - o Local loop buses
  - o Connect Woodburn Ave to Senter St.
    - Did not receive a positive response
  - o Raise Senter St playing field up to level of Senter St, have parking underneath, field above
- Amenities
  - o Promenade someplace: stores, seating, trees
- Activities
  - o Night life in town – Bell School incorporate community activities and business
  - o Movie theater over Rite Aid
  - o Art Museum in fire house “complex”
- Business
  - o add development facing the field
    - pedestrian mall in between existing retail and new retail
  - o create facades on both sides
    - make existing entrances of retail better, more attractive
    - make back entrances also more attractive
  - o more retail mix
  - o support local incentives

- o controversial – demo – gas station
  - family-oriented restaurant, re-engage with your neighbors
  - but where would gas station go?

### SITE 3

Summary: The train station is a destination whose history should spill out into its surroundings. Through better traffic and parking management and beautification of the area, pedestrians, vehicle passengers, and bicyclists would be safe. The station itself would be revitalized through these actions and hopefully reactivated through the presence of a good restaurant and other events and activities.

#### Short Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Sidewalks – Woodburn, South Greeley to Station
  - o Replace bike racks, bike rack near station, increase bike racks
  - o reconfigure some of the parking near train station to improve ped safety and traffic
  - o move taxi stand, to other side of the station
  - o improve drop off/pickup
    - current problem is that so many cars wait to pick up, but have no place to park while waiting
  - o better waiting areas
  - o reconfigure handicap parking
  - o reconfigure woodburn ave. to allow dedicated left/right turning lanes onto Greeley
- Amenities
  - o Light the crosswalk
  - o Information kiosk with a map
  - o Lighting and seating in the Green area
  - o additional gardens/shrubbery, put near medians, and near monument
  - o maintain greenery, remove dead trees
- Activities
  - o More public events (e.g. coffee house, activities on green)
- o encourage additional community uses within the station
  - farmers' market
  - craft fair
  - art show
  - historic exhibits
- o Saturday night activities
- Business

#### Long Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o More parking
- Multi-story parking in south lot to free up spaces to build other business spots
  - o implement park and rides, using incentives
  - o Better sidewalks, crosswalks everywhere
  - o Create more links throughout
  - o Make pedestrian friendly
  - o encourage pedestrians to walk to town
    - additional town sidewalks, Douglas rd.
    - stairs from bridge down to platform
  - o Napoli plan to raise playing field
  - o find entrances/exits to station that don't go through town (ramp from bridge)
- Amenities
  - o Make station more of a magnet – develop the green, etc.
- Activities
- Business
  - o More commercial activities in station
    - Concierge
    - Restaurants
    - Newsstand
    - Books
    - Ice Cream
    - Starbucks
  - o Make green more commercial
  - o Better commercial tie-ins
  - o BID



**SITE 4**

Summary: As the gateway to town, the current triangle park would be expanded and transformed into the village green, opening up and inviting people into an enlivened downtown Chappaqua.

**Short Term Improvements**

- Street/Traffic
  - o Widen sidewalks
  - o Fix up sidewalks
  - o Make handicap accessible
  - o Improved/more crosswalk connectivity
  - o Pinch down roads – increase park area
  - o More traffic cops vs. lights (friendly)
  - o Slow down traffic on Greeley
  - o reverse flow on king to allow egress
  - o put stop sign at Greeley and Quaker, giving pedestrian access to cross
  - o no stops going south, only going north
  - o reorganize parking plan for downtown
    - consider back parking lot
- Amenities
  - o Improve lighting on a pedestrian scale
  - o Flag
    - Light the flag and make it bigger
  - o Improve/clean landscaping
  - o games, chess
  - o Historical signage (traffic signage)
  - o remove existing signs in front of green
  - o Street graphics
  - o Horace Greeley Statue in Green? (or at Greeley House?)
  - o Southwest corner of site
    - driveway from Citibank should be removed, use commuter lot for entrance/egress
    - putting building where the lot is closed to mimic Citigroup curved building
    - close doors on back of business to get people onto sidewalk

- Activities
- Business
  - o Create BID
  - o Redevelop zoning guidelines
  - o improve storefronts (front & back)– paint, improve rooflines, make more consistent, maintain and upgrade
  - o improve garbage clean up
  - o no more banks, no more real estate
    - only allow retail

**Long Term Improvements**

- Street/Traffic
  - o More urban design/traffic studies
  - o Add texture, pattern (bomonite-like) to sidewalks
  - o close Greeley, so that traffic goes around triangle and the park is connected to Greeley country home
  - o build parking structure under playing field
- Amenities
  - o Underground utilities
  - o Better alternatives for barricades – stone walls? (Bell School – make it look nice)
  - o lower triangle park
    - pave as a plaza
    - park becomes a village green
- Activities
- Business
  - o More business/better mix
  - o add more retail with pedestrian street

**SITE 5**

Summary: As another town center, this site is envisioned with mixed-use developments that keep to the small old town feel of Chappaqua. With wider sidewalks, beautification, maintenance, and businesses/restaurants spilling onto sidewalks, the Greeley and King area could become a community focal point for much retail and social activity.

## Short Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Clean and repair sidewalks
  - o More crosswalks
  - o Bump-outs with landscaping (experiment)
  - o For place with no signal:
    - Stop signs or Mini-roundabout
  - o Remote parking behind for employees
  - o Close alley next to Marmalade (gate)
  - o Remote use of wide sidewalks
  - o Shift benches for Eastern circulation near Starbucks
  - o Lower King
    - wider sidewalks
    - change to parallel parking
  - o stripe to widen sidewalks
  - o make more ped. Friendly
    - eliminate police parking
  - o change to retail parking
    - fix dangerous curbs and sidewalks in intersection
  - o they are broken, missing, uneven, and not ADA-compliable
  - o North Greeley
    - clear sidewalk
- Amenities
  - o Lower King
    - more trees
    - punctuate the view, beautify
    - instead of looking at train station metal, look at cherry tree (ex. Bistro Maxine)
    - dress up alley way with murals
  - o North Greeley
    - move planters to wall at dry cleaners (or remove planters)
    - trim trees to open up space
    - cover ugly wall
    - screen parking lot across from Rite Aid
    - Screen Rite-Aid parking lot
- change Verizon fence, improve look for verizon
- o dress up alley to soccer field (by jewelry store)
  - make it an even greater access to field and community center
  - name it, dress it up
- o create walkway to community center
- o create park-ette at soccer field/community center corner
- o paint the white cinder block barn in parking lot by soccer field
  - but it's being torn down, no need for paint
- o landscape the parking lot
- o enhance backs of buildings
- o create a scene out of the playing and soccer
- o façade improvements
  - esp. of dry cleaners facing N. Greeley
- o Clean-up and maintenance
  - Garbage and Weeds
- o More Lighting - Old-fashioned streetlights
- o Get rid of newspaper boxes
- Activities
  - o Recalculate flood plain
- Business
  - o Awnings on storefronts
  - o Retail only on ground floor
  - o Lower King
    - work with new development – old drama building (across tracks)
  - o North Greeley
    - put restaurant on northeast corner
  - o backs of buildings
    - make them fronts!
    - North Greeley Parking lot – Takayama
    - Family Britches, Grappolo (deck)
    - encourage people to use that section of town
    - make useful space



### Long Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Stump removal
  - o Parking structure for remote employee parking (get local employees off streets)
  - o New sidewalks: other than cement
  - o Parking structure for commuters – direct access without going through town
  - o more intersection control
  - o right turn lane from Greeley onto King
- Amenities
  - o Make all new buildings out of wood
  - o Bury utilities
  - o Water features
  - o make southeast corner into a plaza
- Activities
  - o Gathering places
    - Schmooze
    - Bring dogs
    - Drink coffee
    - Maybe gazebo or triangle
  - o street related activities
    - entertainment
    - retail opportunities – get them outside
    - social opportunities
- Business
  - o Enforce setbacks (10')
  - o Building @ pocket park
  - o Increase critical mass of shopping
  - o Guidelines for storefronts
  - o develop parking lot on n. Greeley – mixed use
  - o extend downtown retail all the way to the post office in a pedestrian friendly way
    - sidewalks
    - parking behind retail

### SITE 6

Summary: Site 6 is envisioned to be connected to the downtown. With the improvements, people will be drawn up King St. to experience a diversity and attractiveness of shops.

### Short Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o Gateway to town
  - o Clearly defined sidewalks – pavers
  - o curbcuts
  - o Improved sidewalk along Grappolo to parking lot
  - o Widen sidewalks
  - o More crosswalks
  - o Sidewalks with curb cuts
  - o Sidewalk enhancements
- Amenities
  - o Move Horace Greeley Statue to triangle @ bridge to town
  - o Improved lighting in town (old fashioned)
  - o General overall beautification of sidewalks and planters continuing up to the village yard
  - o Improve public space by community center
    - Tables
    - Chairs
    - Umbrellas
    - Planters
    - Keeping clean
  - o More seating
  - o Plantings repaired
  - o Continuity between downtown and here using landscape and historical, New England charm
  - o More accessible for pedestrians

- Activities
  - o Farmers' market
  - o More holiday decorations
  - o community center should be full-blown to serve all ages and demographics
  - o connect activity of Greeley house, community center, Grappolo, to soccer field to Bell School to retail
- Business
  - o Murals on vacant store windows
  - o Retailers to consider leaving on their signage lights during evening hours
  - o Make entrance to Horace Greeley House more welcoming – light up at night
  - o Better retail windows
  - o Better signage

#### Long Term Improvements

- Street/Traffic
  - o King Street along Family Britches and Grappolo should be “T” intersection by keeping width of King Street to Senter Street uniform. Would create space for seating, trees, and shortens walk from King Street from Grappolo to Takayama Restaurant
  - o 3-way stop sign @ King St and Greeley
  - o Improve parking
    - More parking
    - underground parking lot under soccer field
- Amenities
  - o Pedestrian mall in town
  - o Underground utilities
  - o Hire a planner to create links with downtown
    - More unification with downtown & history
  - o Create more standard architectural design
- Activities
- Business
  - o Create a place/plaza with diversity of local shops

- o Link shops behind soccer field and connecting alley ways
- o Add plaza of shops to underground parking lot under soccer field
  - extend Grappolo to fields into the village green, opening up and inviting people into an enlivened downtown Chappaqua.



