

Flushing West Open House
July 29, 2015 from 6-8pm at the Flushing YMCA
Notes from discussion boards

Parks and Open Space

- More green space/open space and accessibility
- Parks amenities are important for families
- Flushing Meadows Corona Park
 - Soften eastern edge
 - Better welcoming at Avery/ College Point Boulevard
 - More maintenance, grass, staff, and funding
 - Outside entities should not use park's property
- Walking distance is important:
 - People need a small park nearby, especially for seniors
 - Hard to get to Flushing Meadows Corona Park
 - Even for young people and kids the distance of ½ mile to FMCP/ Kissena Corridor Park is prohibitive - some have never been/ don't know what amenities exist.
- Lack of open space: small parks like Bland Playground are important- important because adjacent to affordable housing, important to those residents
- Passive open spaces desired – a lot of the parks in the greater Downtown Flushing area have programmed spaces or spaces geared toward recreation. Desired: Small public space with soil pathways, pine trees, vegetation, opportunities for Tai Chi, and quiet/ artistic spaces
- Build at least one large city park in Flushing West rezoning area
- Active recreation should be included in the study area
- ADA compliance
- Use of more non-motorized transportation
- Community garden plus playground for children
- Equitable funding across parks throughout city
- Community garden would be well-used by seniors, could grow their own produce
- Safety getting to FMCP- 41st road near FMCP- no light on street near Home Depot
- Flushing should focus on history/ historic sites to contribute to the area's identity and draw tourism
- Flushing High School – unused open space can be used as parkland
- Plant more street trees
- Waterfront access down to water/ Natural shoreline and boating in other areas.
- Weeping Beech: lack of oversight and upkeep, people often smoking, no bathrooms
- More recreational staffing
- Former Korean market in Flushing West study area?

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Parks and Open Space:

- More trees on Kissena Blvd
- Lack of public parking at FMCP
- Need bike access from College Point into FMCP
- More open space in Flushing!
- Public plazas along Roosevelt Ave.
- No reason to spend a day in Flushing – need for open space/breathing air
- Capitalize on cultural landmarks (Quaker House, etc.)
- Bowne House and Underground Railroad

Affordable Housing

Need more affordable housing units in Flushing, especially for seniors

- Very low and low/moderate income housing that meets incomes of Flushing residents
- Rents are high and have been increasing
- Many families have roommates, overcrowding - people rather share than leave the neighborhood
- Need for housing for seniors on fixed income (\$10,000 per year)
- Sometimes 3-5 seniors must split a 1BR apartment because it costs \$1,600
- Opportunity to legalize basements to open up more housing?

Need for affordable homeownership

- People value owning homes, but one bedroom apartments are selling for \$450,000

Preservation of existing housing and residents is important; also need to alleviate congestion

- Concerns about adding more congestion to the neighborhood by increasing the population – streets are already full and transit overburdened
- Residents that live in buildings in the Flushing West area are surrounded by construction (which they say goes on at all hours, potentially illegally) and fear displacement and demolition of their building
- Protections need to be in place for residents, including temporary relocation if necessary and provisions to ensure they have priority to move into new units

Need to address housing discrimination

- Issue of landlords who only rent to their ethnicity

Need for more information regarding HPD resources and services

- Landlord workshops to hear about financing and tax incentives to develop affordable housing

- Tenant workshops on application process to apply for affordable housing or other rental assistance programs, especially for people on fixed income

Adjusting boundaries of “Flushing housing study area”

- Need to revisit boundaries of study area to see if median income might be different. Current study area includes homeowners in single-family buildings that may skew numbers.

Including more community involvement in the process

- Concerns about what will happen on rezoning sites. How to ensure conversations between the City and developers enable the community to play a meaningful role?
- Residents from surrounding Queens communities who attended expressed their concern for what effect changes in Flushing might have on their neighborhoods

Need for recreation and community services to be integrated

- Open space for recreation, such as tennis, mini golf, or walking is much needed
- Hospital is overcrowded with patients
- Opportunities for small businesses
- Day care and senior centers

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Affordable Housing:

- Hong Kong as a model? Others? On how to pay cost for affordability

Schools

- There needs to be another school; it is unclear as to where to put it.
- Bus idling

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Schools:

- Additional school in the area
Need for a high school
Need a school if more density

Community Services

- Too many people in self-help Senior Center
- Communication problems between Asians and English speakers (language barriers)
- Sanitation problem (more clearing of garbage)

More garbage bins- recycling is a big issue- no recycling

- Home sharing/adult home programs
- Limited English immigrant seniors (i.e. Korean, Chinese, etc.) do not know how to access services e.g. how to apply for low income senior housing; everything is only in English.
- Need mental health services (loneliness)
- A lot of people don't know what services there are.
- Need the presence of DYCD (Department of Youth and Community Development?)

Transportation

- Expansion of all transit services to meet the increase in population
- Improve maintenance of streets (i.e. pot holes) and sidewalks
- Add ferries along Flushing Creek to Manhattan
- Need more municipal parking
- Increase the supply of parking
- Research and fix congestion at College Point Blvd and Roosevelt Ave
- Too much congestion on Main Street

Pedestrians

- Wider sidewalks
- Pedestrian malls

Buses

- Select bus service to speed traffic along Main St.
- Need for a central bus terminal/station to get buses off the street parking spots
- Rerouting of bus routes to alleviate traffic along Main St. – spread bus stops around downtown (further east and west of Main Street) to help ease congestion
- Improve bus route 65 by rerouting to run from College Point Blvd/Northern Blvd south to SkyView
- Better connections onto Route #58
- SBS on 164th St. would be welcomed
- Misinformation about buses “in service” or not. Why do the buses pass by without stopping?
- From 82nd /Roosevelt Ave to 108th St, there is not enough bus connections.
- Bus layover of 41st Avenue is congested

Bicycles

- Need separated bicycle lanes
- More bike connections, especially north/south streets
- Bike lanes on Kissena/Main Street
- Expansion of CitiBike into Flushing
- Need additional bicycle racks

Subway/Rail

- LIRR entrance on Union St. to redirect pedestrians from Main Street.
- Fix elevator/escalators at Roosevelt Ave. subway station
- New 7 train station on Parsons/Northern
- Widening of station stairs
- Extend 7 train to spur economic development
- Expand proposed LGA air train to College Point/Roosevelt Ave.
- Put a 7 train stop at College Point Blvd
- Put a train stop at Parsons Blvd

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Transportation:

- 7 train terminal station at Parson Boulevard
- More bike lanes on Kissena Boulevard
- More Q16 buses?
- 7 train station at Northern Blvd
- Bad congestion/gridlock in Downtown Flushing
- Reroute Q16, Q13, Q28
- Improve bus circulation in Downtown Flushing
- Improve traffic on College Point Blvd
- Wider staircase at Main Street 7 station
- Roosevelt Ave and Janet Place is a dangerous intersection for pedestrians
- Bike routes on 41st Avenue
- Bus traffic back up on Main Street
- Generally more language access on signs, etc.
- More parking in Flushing West study area
- More public parking in Downtown Flushing
- Two pedestrian Bridges across Flushing Creek from the Study area
- Parking meters on Main Street
- Bike lanes on College Point Blvd
- Have more trains!
- Trains are overcrowded
- Parking at 35th Avenue and Linden Place
- No car zone at 35th Avenue and Linden Place
- Need a bus terminal
- Bike lanes in Flushing
- Crossing a challenge along College Point Blvd at 40th Road and Roosevelt Ave
- College Point and Roosevelt Ave is a problematic intersection auto going south and pedestrian crossing
- Need more parking in Downtown Flushing
- Garbage cans/parking (none) on Kissena Blvd
- Pedestrian bridge across Flushing Creek
- Subway station at Main Street has to expand west

- What happens to contaminated soil?
- How do you get a clean-up grant?
- Who decides what a brownfield site is?
- Do we know what sites are “brownfield” and contaminated?
- What has the LDC already studied?
- When will the current study of brownfields on the site be released?
- What is Flushing Willets Point Corona Local Development Corporations’ role in a rezoning?
- Where are the E designations in Flushing? What types?
- Cleanup should be mandatory for sites with E designations before building!

Small Businesses

Comments from community members:

- Would like more language access (customer service)
- Would like a NYC Business Solutions Center to locate in downtown Flushing
- Would like incubator spaces for entrepreneurs
- Would like to see affordable commercial spaces for local small and medium-sized businesses

Questions from community members:

- Will the rezoning increase property owners’ taxes?
- What will be done to protect business owners from being forced out by increased property values/rents?
- How can more businesses take advantage of minority/women certification?
- What can be done to help businesses by addressing parking/congestion in Flushing West?

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map:

- More stores outside of Main Street
- Retail improves walkability

Health

Medical access

- Language services at hospital
- Hospitals are distant and overcrowded
- Expand ER services
- Mental Health services to address isolation, depression, and suicide among seniors and youth.
- Language access for mental health-stress resources
- Improve Flushing Hospital
- Increase in urgent care. City MD, etc.

Active communities/lifestyles

- Open recreational space
- Walking tour of Flushing history
- Greater mix of stores culturally
- More destinations to walk to
- More rec centers: Cost of YMCA
- YMCA has no parking
- Outdoor track needed
- No one goes to Flushing Meadows
- Congestion discourages biking

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Health:

- More mental health clinics needed
- More Emergency room services needed in greater Flushing area

Water Quality

- Pollution in Flushing Creek /Need to clean the river
- Stop dumping Combined Sewer Overflows into the creek
- Make it a recreation destination
- How will housing be built with all the environmental contamination in the FW rezoning area?
- Dredging the creek/bay to improve air quality/reduce smell.
- Concern about building (including walkways/parkland) right along a very polluted creek
- Effects of the asphalt and other manufacturing plants on Flushing Creek

Notes from Neighborhood Opportunities Map related to Water Quality:

- Low point and water pooling at Main Street/37th Avenue intersection
- Smell at Flushing Creek
- Raw sewage at Flushing Creek
Why is it too difficult to drain?
- Linear waterfront park can only come with a clean creek