



The Town of Westfield Master Plan Reexamination Report
Community & Public Participation Summary for the April 24th Westfield Community Workshop



The Town of Westfield Master Plan
Reexamination Report
Public Participation Summary for the
April 24th Community Workshop

Prepared By:



architects + engineers
practical approach. creative results.

Workshop Date:
April 24, 2019

Prepared Date:
May 3, 2019



Community & Public Participation

Purpose

This Master Plan Reexamination Report cannot be written, nor recommendations made without input from the people who live, work, and visit Westfield. Without valuable public input, this document will not accurately represent the wants and needs of Westfield residents. The Master Plan Reexam Team (H2M (*lead*) and TimHaahs) is working hard to obtain ideas, opinions, feedback, and concerns from the public throughout the year long Master Plan Reexamination process using “high touch” to “high tech” approaches, ranging from traditional workshops to online engagement. This collaborative approach provides community insight on the future of Westfield.

Community Workshops

A Master Plan Reexamination Steering Committee comprised of Westfield community leaders is helping to guide the Master Plan Reexam process. The Steering Committee, upon their first meeting in December 2018, believed input from several active Town organizations separate from public workshops would benefit the Master Plan Reexamination process. The Town of Westfield and the Master Plan Reexam Team planned six community workshops, four to occur in the beginning of the process to gather information and two additional meetings at the end to provide a “feedback loop” for residents.

The first public Community Workshop was held on March 21st at the Edison School Cafeteria, where approximately 70 people attended and the second workshop was held on Wednesday April 3rd at Town Hall in the Community Room, where approximately 90 people attended. The April 24th Community Workshop was held at the Edison School Cafeteria where 96+ people attended. All workshops ran from 7pm to 9pm in the evening.

The Master Plan Team and Town of Westfield is hosting several public Community Workshops in the month ahead to continue outreach efforts. These events include:

- Monday, April 29, 7-9pm: Town Hall Community Room
- Sunday, May 5: Spring Fling

In the fall, the Master Plan Team will hold Town-wide public meetings to discuss the draft of the plan and gain feedback on the Master Plan Reexamination Report’s draft goals, objectives and recommendations.

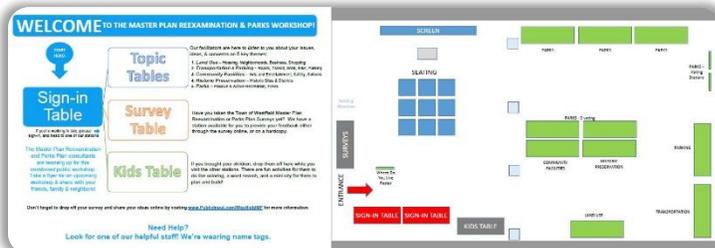


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The workshop began with an introduction from Jeff Janota of H2M Associates, the consultant Project Manager preparing the Master Plan Reexamination Report and head organizer of the event. Erik DeLine and Nicole Venezia, planners from H2M, were also in attendance. Also, in attendance were Jim Zullo of Tim Haahs, the parking consultant, and Pat Hoagland and Keith Rodenhauer from Brandstetter Carroll, the Parks Plan consultant.

Upon sign-in, participants were given a Master Plan Reexamination Report flyer and an orientation/room layout handout for the night's activities. While waiting to sign-in participants were asked to indicate where they lived in Westfield. Participants were then directed by team members to gather near the projector for a short introductory presentation.



Above: orientation/room layout handout;
Right: Master Plan Reexam Flyer

**Town of Westfield presents:
Master Plan Reexamination**

The Town of Westfield is launching its Master Plan Reexamination to shape the physical, social, environmental, and economic future of the town. The Master Plan Reexam will provide a framework for preserving the Town's character, ensuring its diversity, supporting investment, and promoting desired changes, and we need your help.

Get Involved!

As part of the planning process, we are holding public meetings in Westfield and spreading the word on the new project website. We are talking to residents, businesses, and other stakeholders about the issues you face. We want to provide an opportunity for you to share your ideas for the Town you want Westfield to become!

— that means YOU!

We're asking you to get involved so we can ask you the right questions, listen to what you say, build a deeper understanding of your community, and help you find ways to make it better.

The Reexam will result in revised Goals & Objectives & a new Town-wide Vision Statement.

The Reexam covers the Elements of the Master Plan:

- Land Use
- Transportation & Parking
- Housing
- Downtown Economic Development
- Community Facilities
- Historic Preservation

What is a Master Plan Reexam?

A Reexamination Report is a reassessment of a municipality's current Master Plan, which is required by law to be conducted at least every 10 years. The report documents what changes and problems have taken place since the last Master Plan, and identifies new recommended objectives and policies for consideration by the Town.

The last time the Town of Westfield drafted a full Master Plan was in 2003, and the Town last reexamined the Master Plan in 2009. The Master Plan Reexam is expected to be complete at the end of 2019.

**Join Us at an Upcoming
Community Workshop**

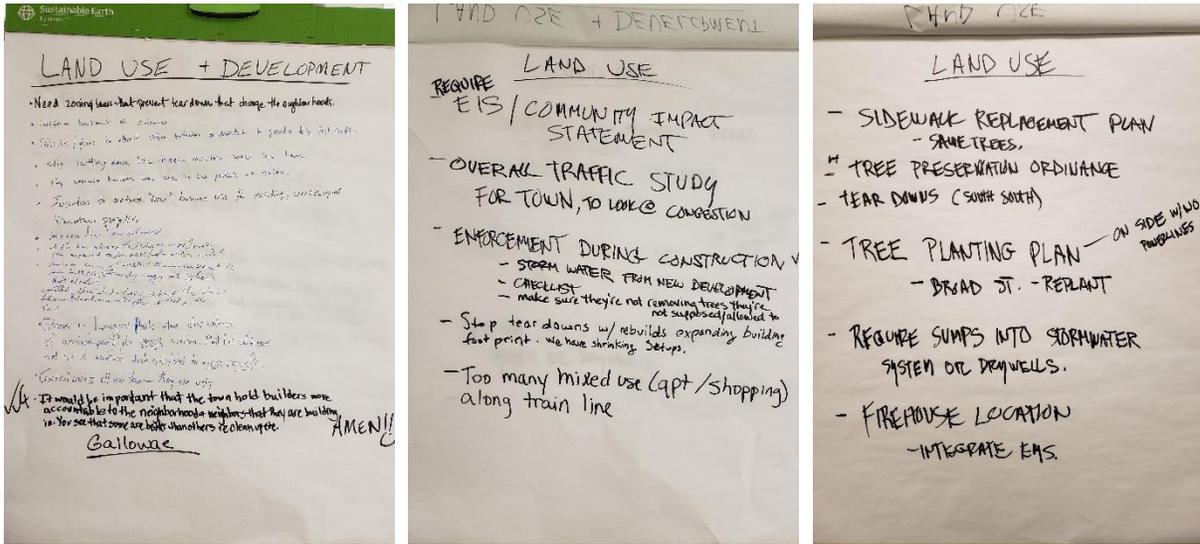
- Thursday, March 22, 7-9pm at Ludlow Intermediate School Cafeteria
- Wednesday, April 3, 7-9pm at Town Hall Community Room
- Wednesday, April 24, 7-9pm at Edison Intermediate School Cafeteria
- Monday, April 28, 7-9pm at Town Hall Community Room

**at the
Spring Fling
• May 5**

Visit the project website & take the survey!
www.PublicInput.com/WestfieldMP



1. Land Use & Economic Development



Land Use & Economic Development concerns include:

Community Character

- Require Environmental Impact Statement /Community Impact Statement for major site plan and subdivision applications
- Prepare an overall traffic analysis for Town to look at congestion and buildout
- **Stop tear downs** with rebuilds expanding building footprint.
- **Need zoning laws that prevent tear downs or limit the size of new homes that change the neighborhoods**
- It would be important that the town hold builders more accountable to the neighborhood and neighbors that they are building in. You see that some are better than others – re: clean up, etc.
- Utility wire should be buried, inactive lines removed.

Built vs. Natural Environment

- **Trees:** save trees by having a sidewalk replacement plan; Tree

preservation ordinance; Tree planting plan – on side with no powerlines – Broad St., replant ; stop cutting down trees, maintain what we have

- Enforcement during construction: Storm water from new development; include in checklist' to make sure they're not removing trees they're not supposed/allowed to
- Require sump-pumps into stormwater system or drywells, not to the curb
- Stream in Tamaques Park shows clear evidence of over development via sever erosion. Must limit subdivisions and loss of woodland which contributes to excess run-off
- Something should be done about the "stream" that runs behind houses on Myrtle.



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Downtown

- **Policies/plans to attract office businesses to downtown to provide daily foot traffic**
- Incentives to motivate “new” business use for existing, unoccupied downtown properties

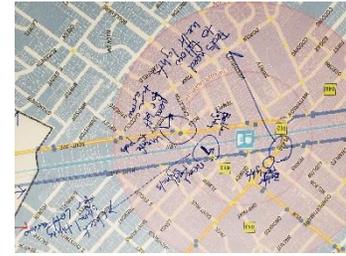
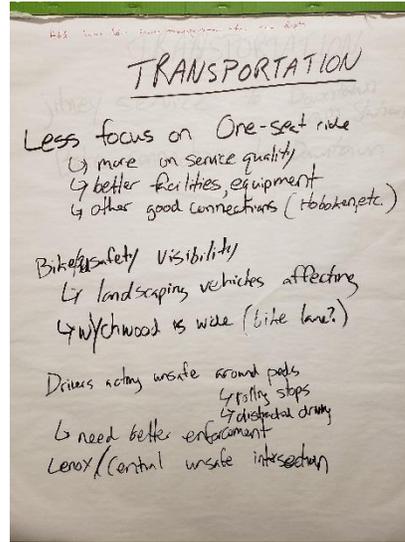
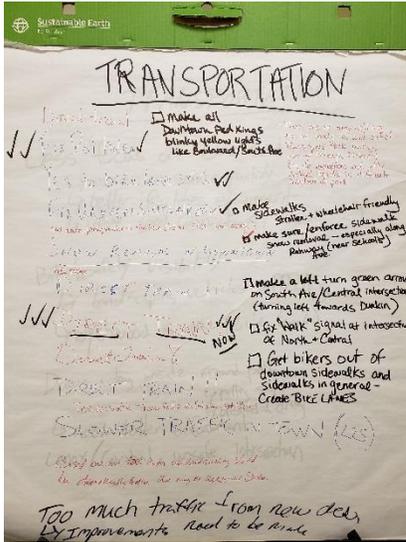
- Too many mixed use (apt./shopping) along train line in adjoining municipalities

Miscellaneous

- Firehouse location – integrate EMS, fire in Centralized location



2. Transportation



Transportation concerns include:

Transit

- **Direct Train!**
- Terminate train ride in Hoboken, not Newark
- How about **Jitney service** to the train station (like South Orange)
- Less focus on one-seat ride: More on service quality; better facilities, equipment; other good connections (Hoboken, etc.)
- Add hours for senior transportation through Rec. Department

Bike & Pedestrian

- North Ave uncomfortable to walk, narrow sidewalks, sidewalks in poor condition, some owned by town
- **Better pedestrian lights**, needed at Prospect and E. Broad Street intersection
- On South Ave. – better lighting, unsafe for pedestrians, need for left turn arrow onto Central
- At Plaza, Pedestrians need to follow walk lights
- On North Ave. – Need Pedestrian signals, check signal timing for left

- arrow, crosswalk to park, more crosswalks in area
- Make all downtown pedestrian crossings blinking yellow lights like Boulevard/South Ave.
- Fix “walk” signal at intersection of North and Central
- Fix uneven sidewalks; make sidewalks stroller and wheelchair friendly; make sure/enforce sidewalk snow removal, especially along Rahway Ave. (near schools)
- **Address pedestrian access to Tamaques Park** - no easy walking access roads in and out of Park unless you go through Dickson. On the weekends and after school, traffic is difficult into/out of park
- Lamberts Mill - Better pedestrian direction to safety, crossing lights to facilitate turn
- Yes to **bike lanes/paths** - get bikers off of sidewalks, especially in the downtown
- Landscaping vehicles affect bike/ped visibility in Wychwood neighborhood Road is wide (potential bike lane?)



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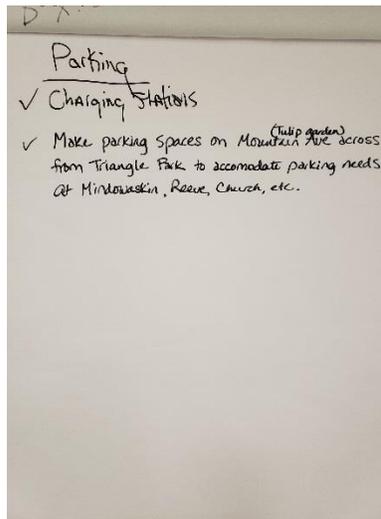
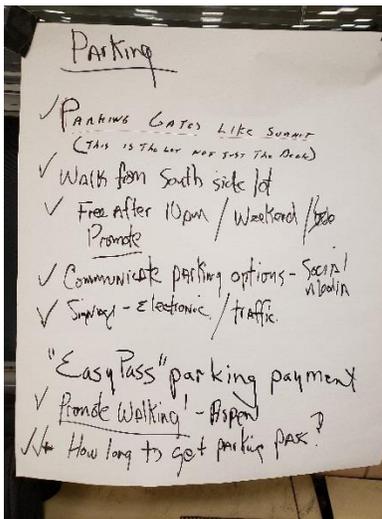
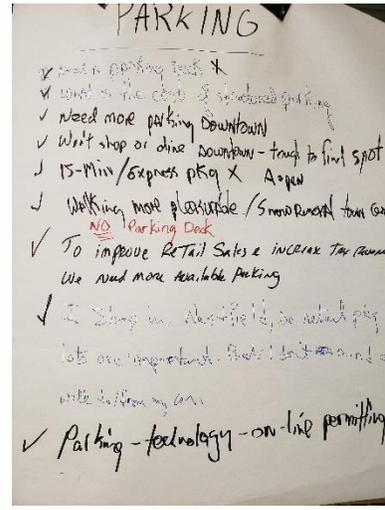
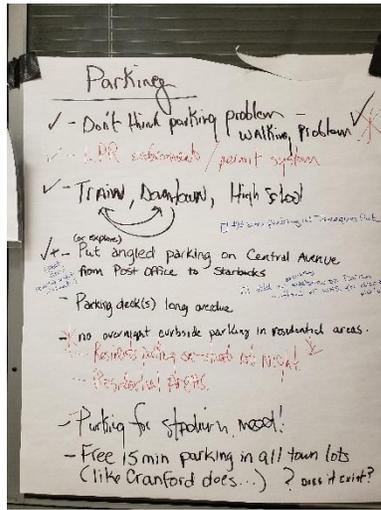
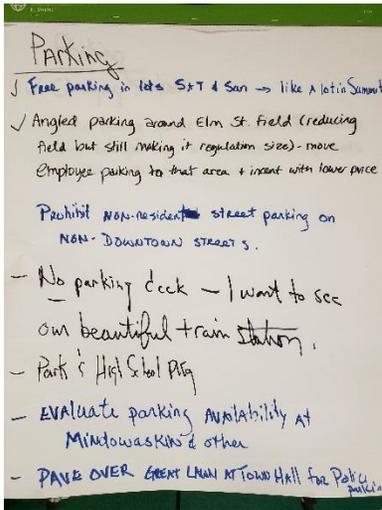
- Create bike connections to downtown

Vehicles & Roadways

- Snow removal in Downtown
- Fix potholes
- Based on our tax rates, our road quality should be dramatically better. We may be worst in State.
- Too much traffic from new development; improvements need to be made
- Make a left turn green arrow on South Ave./Central intersection (turning left towards Dunkin)
- Drivers acting unsafe around pedestrians: rolling stops; distracted driving; need better enforcement
- Lenox/Central unsafe intersection
- On Boulevard – traffic calming, safer for bikes/pedestrians, speed indication
- On Central – better street lighting, advanced notification for left turn, pedestrian light
- On Columbus to E. Grove, speed indicator? NEEDED
- Slower traffic in town (<25)
- Speeding on Lamberts Mill
- Lamberts Mill/Rahway – improve safety at intersection, traffic calming for schools
- Loral Drive – needs “no turn on red”



3. Parking



Parking concerns include:

Downtown Parking

- 15-min/express parking
- Free 15-minute parking in all town lots (like Cranford does...)
- Need a **parking deck**
- Parking deck(s) long overdue
- Need more parking downtown
- No parking deck
- Promote free parking after 10pm and on weekends
- Free parking in lots Saturday and Sunday, like a lot in Summit
- We need more available parking
- Positive feedback for existing angled parking on Prospect
- Put (or explore) angled parking on Central Avenue from Post Office to Starbucks
- **Angled parking** around Elm St. field (reducing field but still making it regulation size) move employee parking to that area and incentivize with lower price



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- Won't shop or dine downtown – tough to find parking spot
- Shared parking study
- I shop in Westfield, retail parking, lots are important. But I don't mind a walk to/from my car.
- Parking gates like Summit (this is the lot not just the deck)

Walking & Parking

- Don't think parking problem – walking problem!
- Walking more pleasurable/Snow removal town wide
- Walk from South side lot
- Promote walking – Aspen

Parking Systems / Enforcement

- LPR enforcement / permit system
- More technology like online permitting
- "Easy Pass" parking payments
- Communicate parking options via social media
- Signals – electronic/traffic
- Charging stations
- Training of PEO's

Train Station Parking

- No parking deck – I want to see our beautiful train station
- How long to get parking pass?

Resident Parking

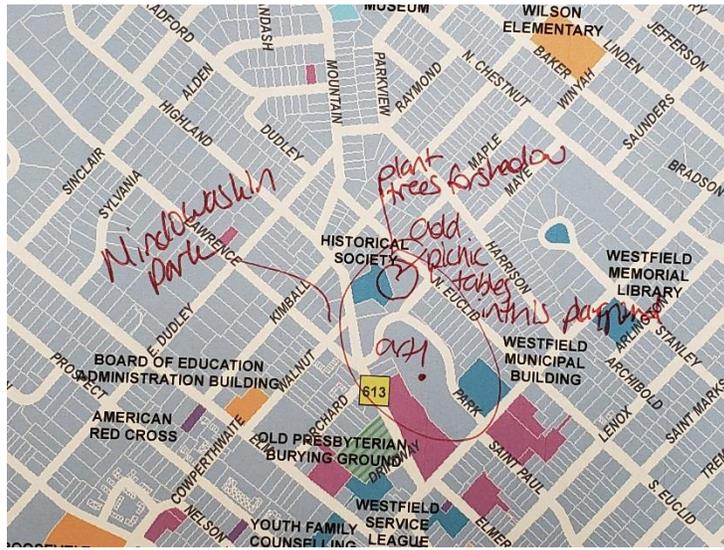
- Prohibit non-resident street parking on non-downtown streets
- **No overnight curbside parking** in residential areas; residents parking on-street at night*; residential areas

Community Facility Parking

- Evaluate parking availability at Mindowaskin and other
- High School parking
- Add a one-way pull-in on Dorian Rd. in front of WHS for drop off, pickup
- Pave over great lawn at Town Hall for Police parking.
- Park parking
- Add some parking at Tamaques Park
- Parking for Kehler stadium need!
- Make parking spaces on Mountain Ave (Tulip Garden) across from Triangle Park to accommodate parking needs at Mindowaskin, Reeve, Church, etc.



4. Community Facilities



Community Facilities concerns include:

Arts & Culture

- A lot of stuff for sports, but not a lot for art
- **More arts in the community!**
- Near Historical Society - Mindowaskin Park, plant trees for shade, add picnic tables in this playground, Art!
- Need a place to sit downtown (to people watch!)

Schools

- I moved here for the schools and downtown
- Westfield Schools are the jewel in our crown!
- Another Kindergarten school? Jefferson is crowded / a lot of kids per classroom – not competitive to other towns for full day
- Need trash cans at Edison school with “no pet waste” signs
- **Create relationship with Town and Board of Ed.** to maintain properties – space share/field share (Jefferson, largest field & Washington) Need

restrooms at Jefferson, people go in bushes, behind schools and neighbor’s properties

Parks & Fields Programming & Misc.

- Elm Street Fields and tennis courts underutilized
- The school fields are not in good condition. PTOs fundraise constantly for playground equipment
- Our parks are great for community activities, would love more programs
- They nailed “leash your dog” signs at Tamaques Park onto trees! Use posts!
- Surrounding towns have good park festivals that Westfield does not have
- Ice Rink – stay!
- Garwood’s turf field and community center combo – we need to do a combo! With bathrooms nearby and concessions
- **Need a Community Center** – definitely a gap in town, need a



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community meeting center, not specific to anything – for everyone!

- Lack of parking at Kehler impacts surrounding residential streets

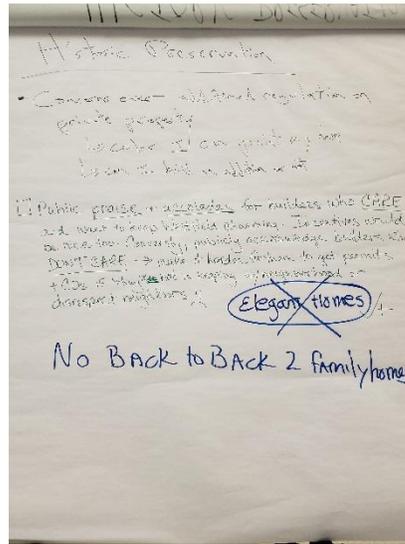
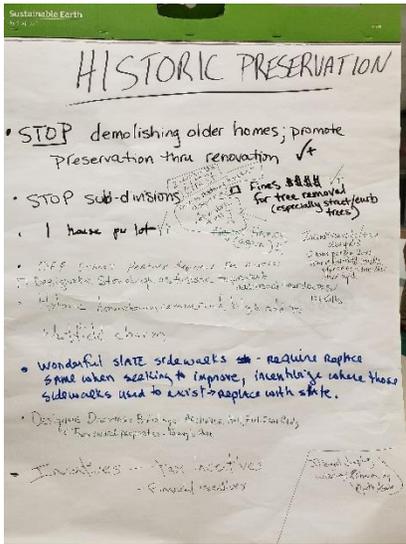
Miscellaneous

- Reevaluate properties for sale – that Town could be (i.e. law firm building adjacent to Town Hall to expand parking)
- Safety Alert! Crossing guard and kid got struck by car in front of Edison School

- Too many police vehicles for size of town, all gas guzzlers, how about electric?
- We still have a movie theater (a positive) but we need more outdoor dining & coffee – we need that synergy that keeps people in town
- Make Quimby pedestrian mall
- Cranford's S. Ave. makes Westfield's Ave look bad! Develop S. Ave. – make it "happening" like Cranford!



5. Historic Preservation



Historic Preservation concerns include:

Demolitions & New Construction

- Stop demolishing older homes; promote preservation through renovation
- Public praise and accolades for builders who care and want to keep Westfield charming. Incentives would be nice too. Conversely, publicly acknowledge builders who don't care – make it harder for them to get permits and COs if they're not in keeping with neighborhood or disrespect neighbors

Community Character

- Stop subdivisions
- 1 house per lot
- 2 new builds on Elm St., next to Addams House, disgusting and not historic at all!!
- Elegant homes (again)
- Fines for tree removal (especially street/curb trees)
- No back to back 2-family homes
- Town of Westfield installs appropriate sidewalks and streetlights

- 2-hour parking zones
- Off street parking required for rentals

Preservation

- Designate Stoneleigh as historic to prevent additional teardowns/rebuilds
- Designate downtown buildings – Archainiam Hall, Flat Iron Building, and town-owned properties – Triangle Park
- Historic downtown commercial buildings add to Westfield charm
- Wonderful slate sidewalks – require same replacement when seeking to improve, incentivize where those sidewalks used to exist – replace with slate.

Regulation & Incentives

- Incentives to be/stay designated
- Incentives – tax incentives; financial incentives
- Concerns over additional regulation on private property: color I can paint my house; can I build an addition or not