

FALL SEMESTER 2003

WWS 591 (a)

Professor Paul Buckhurst

URBAN PLANNING WORKSHOP:

JOURNAL SQUARE, JERSEY CITY

1. INTRODUCTION

The 2003 Urban Planning Workshop will undertake a study of the Journal Square area in Jersey City, working on behalf of the City's Economic Development Corporation. Historically, Journal Square functioned as Jersey City's central business district, and retail, business and transportation uses contribute to the mixed-use pattern of development that continues to exist in the area. Journal Square also contains the PATH station, linking the City to New York City and Newark, and the main bus station.

Journal Square is one of four Special Improvement District (SIDs) set up to revitalize key business areas within Jersey City. The SID is run by a specially formed public-private partnership dedicated to promoting the area as the Central Business District for the City.

2. THE STUDY AREA

The study area encompasses the Journal Square District and extends southward approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ mile to McGinley Square. The approximately 24-block area is bordered by Newark Avenue to the North; Summit and Tuers Avenues to the East; Montgomery Street to the South and Tonnele and Garrison Avenues to the West. Kennedy Boulevard and Bergen Avenue form an important crossroads at the heart of the study area, coinciding with the PATH train station at the Journal Square Transportation Center. The attached maps show:

- The study area in relation to most of the City's urban development, indicating 5 of the 6 political wards in Jersey City.
- Aerial photograph illustrating building density and showing the PATH train route cutting diagonally through the study area.
- Existing zoning, with the area dominated by the CBD zone surrounded by mixed office/ residential uses.
- Existing buildings.
- The Urban Enterprise Zone that extends over most of the study area.

3. PLANNING ISSUES

The recently completed Master Plan for the City identified a number of planning goals for the Journal Square Area that need to be reviewed and expanded on during the workshop study. Key issues include:

- Establishing and promoting a new identity for the district. Cultural and entertainment uses, expanded retail and office functions and the establishment of a larger scale municipal center have been identified in future programs for the area.
- The need to strengthen linkages between the district and adjacent uses and neighborhoods including the Newark Avenue Commercial Corridor, Hudson County Community College, the McGinley Square Center and the State University campus.
- Enhancing the image and design quality of the area through improved streetscapes and additional pedestrian amenities.

4. WORKSHOP ASSIGNMENT

The Planning Workshop will prepare an illustrated planning report that will analyze existing conditions within the neighborhood and identify recommendations for future City action. Information will also be collected on relevant programs conducted in other municipalities where efforts have been made to revitalize urban neighborhoods. This includes efforts made within communities utilizing the Urban Enterprise Zone program in New Jersey as well as other relevant examples in the USA (for example Florida and Indiana are implementing their own Enterprise Zone strategies).

The twelve-week work program for this workshop will include the following steps:

- Meet with City officials and staff to review study objectives, background information, etc.
- Conduct site analysis and on-site surveys to establish land uses, ownerships, zoning characteristics, pedestrian amenities, and other data needed to gain an understanding of the major issues affecting the study area.
- Conduct meetings and interviews with City planning staff, transportation officials, and others to determine needs and begin the process of formulating a land use strategy.
- Prepare detailed plan proposals encompassing land use recommendations, improved infrastructure and pedestrian amenities, etc.
- Develop presentation material (slides, PowerPoint presentation, etc.) and a final, illustrated report.

In addition to the planning work required to complete the above assignment, the workshop will seek to cover the following areas of interests/skills:

- Examination of selected urban planning case studies, focusing on urban projects in the New York City region.

- Provide a general introduction to planning practice including elements such as land-use and urban design analyses; environmental impact studies; zoning; transportation planning; market studies and community participation.
- Presentation techniques: reports, graphic presentation, slide presentation, computer simulation, etc.
- Provide insight in urban planning/design consultancy (e.g. client promotion, job administration, work process).

5. TIMETABLE

The 12 week program will be divided into two sections, and will include an interim presentation as well as a final presentation. The first half of the semester will focus on detailed analyses of existing conditions and issues; the second will concentrate on the preparation of ideas and proposals for the study area. The preliminary schedule is outlined below:

Week 1	Workshop introduction; overview of assignments.
Week 2	Site meeting in Jersey City; meeting with City officials.
Week 3-4	Work on individual assignments related to site analysis; meetings and interviews; review of relevant case studies.
Week 5	Prepare findings for interim presentation.
Week 6	Interim presentations to client.
Week 7	Mid-term break (Possible travel program to review relevant case studies in other cities).
Week 8	Review study objectives and assignments for remainder of workshop; submit draft report of existing conditions/issues.
Week 9-11	Follow-up meetings with area representatives; preparation of alternative recommendations.
Week 12	Preparation for final presentation
Week 13	Final presentation to Jersey City EDC staff, City officials and other study participants (December 10, in Jersey City)

A written report will be prepared prior to the end of the semester.

6. SCHEDULE FOR SEPTEMBER 19-OCTOBER 24

Regular workshop sessions are scheduled weekly, on Wednesdays from 1:00 pm - 4:10 pm in Room 020. Additional meetings and on-site work will involve regular visits to Jersey City. The schedule for the first part of the semester is as follows:

Week 1	September 17 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to workshop
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- Assignments for existing conditions analysis
 - Case Study: City of Yonkers, NY: Nepperhan Revitalization Study
- Week 2 September 24th
- Site visit and survey
Meeting with City officials (2:00 p.m.)
Address: 30 Montgomery Street (8th fl.), Jersey City
- Week 3 October 1st
- Review individual assignments
 - Guest: Stuart Koperweis (formerly Jersey City EDC)
- Week 4 October 8th
- Follow-up site visit/surveys in Journal Square
 - Interviews with selected study area and City representatives (e.g. Journal Square and McGinley Square SID representatives)
- Week 5 October 15th
- Review study area issues
 - Prepare for interim presentation
 - Guest: Georges Jacquemart, Principal, BFJ: case studies on traffic planning and traffic calming
- Week 6 October 22th
- Interim Presentation** to Client Group, in Jersey City (2:00 p.m.)

7. CONTACTS

Our client and other potential study participants includes the following:

Client:

- Roberta Farber (201) 333.7797 ext. 25
Jersey City Economic Development Corp.
30 Montgomery Street, 8th Fl.
Jersey City, NJ 07302
- Robert Cotter (201) 547.5010
Director, Division of City Planning
- Jeffrey Wenger (201) 547.5010
Principal, Division of City Planning

Advisors/Participants

- Stuart Koperweis (201) 245.4344
- Don Smartt/Dan McGinley (201) 795.1854
Journal Square SID
- Roger Hejazi (201) 433.3012
President, McGinley Square SID
- Suzanne McKiernan Anderson (201) 333.8855
Consultant to City EDC

8. REFERENCE MATERIAL

Useful background material related to the study area will be found in:

- Jersey City Master Plan 2000 Volumes 1 and 2
- Jersey City: An Economic Resource Guide
- Cityscape: Volume I No. 1 (1994): Spatially Targeted Strategies

General reference material that may be helpful is listed in the attached "Suggested Readings" list that was distributed earlier this year.

9. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

As far as possible, the workshop has been structured to enable workshop students to work as “consultants” for the City's Economic Development Corporation. This will involve teamwork as well as work on an individual basis. The workshop requirements include:

- Regular attendance at classes
- Full participation in necessary field work and data gathering
- Completion of writing assignments for the mid-term and final reports
- Participation in oral presentations to client