

Red Bank Master Plan

Virtual Public Workshop Summary

Zoom Meeting

June 9, 2022 | 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm



Introduction

As part of the Borough of Red Bank Master Plan Study, the Borough held a Virtual Public Workshop on June 9th from 6:30 pm to 8:30 pm on Zoom. The purpose of the workshop was to provide the public with an update on study progress, report back on input received from the Virtual Workshop, provide an overview of Small Area Plans, and hear feedback, comments, and questions from attendees. The workshop was publicized through an e-blast to project stakeholders, including Virtual Workshop participants, local media including *Tap Into Red Bank* and *Red Bank Green*, and the Borough of Red Bank School District website. The workshop had 58 attendees including community representatives, media, and members of the public.

Polling Questions

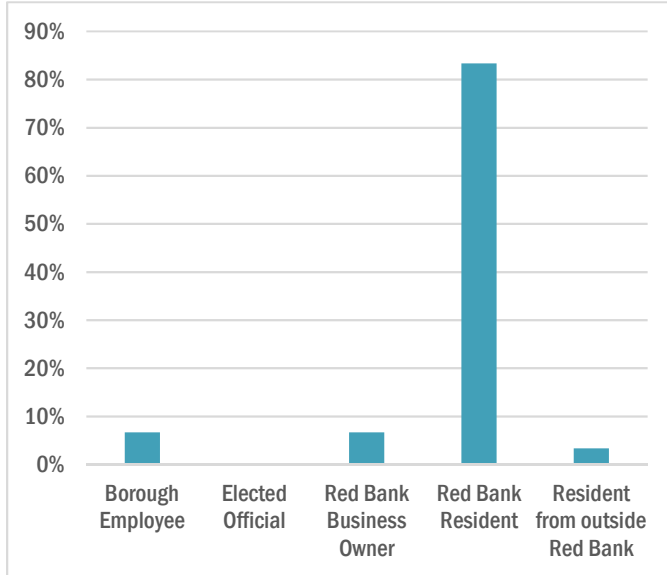
As the project team presented on Master Plan progress, attendees were periodically given to opportunity to provide feedback and comments through the interactive polling tool PollEverywhere. Poll questions were presented on screen and attendees were able to respond via their computers, smartphones, or text message. Responses were shared in real-time with attendees. Below is a summary of questions and responses received.

Master Plan Review and Existing Conditions Summary

The project team presented on the general timeline of the project and "Red Bank Today." This existing report reviews previous plans and studies done in the Borough and reports on demographic trends, economic trends, land use and development, transportation and mobility, community resources, and sustainability.

Question 1

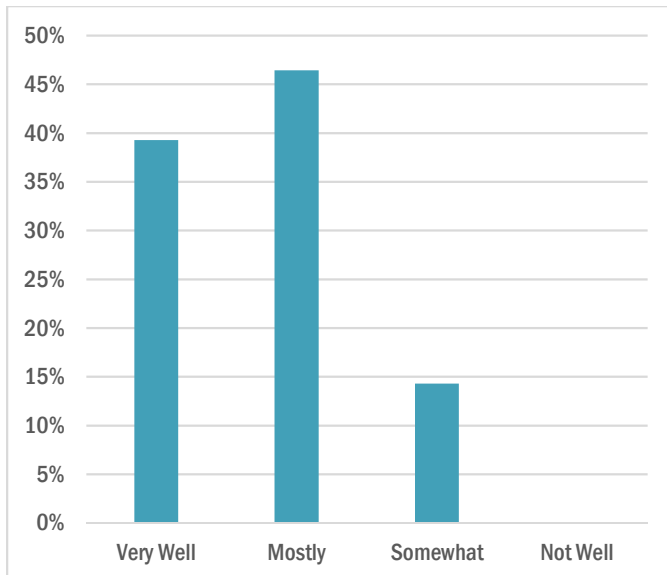
Participants were asked to define if they were a Borough Employee, an Elected Official, a Red Bank Business Owner, a Red Bank Resident, or a Resident from outside Red Bank. Over 85% of respondents were residents of Red Bank.



Response	Count
Borough Employee	2
Elected Official	0
Red Bank Business Owner	2
Red Bank Resident	25
Resident from outside Red Bank	1
<i>Total Respondents</i>	<i>30</i>

Question 2

Workshop participants were shown four emergent themes for the plan: Connected, Balanced, Equitable, and Prepared. They were then asked, "How well do these themes capture what you want to see in the Red Bank Master Plan?"

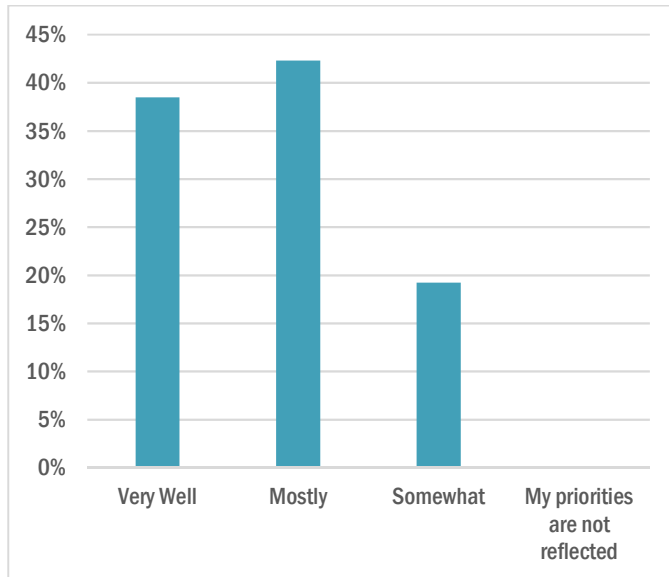


Response	Count
Very Well	11
Mostly	13
Somewhat	4
Not Well	0
<i>Total Respondents</i>	<i>28</i>

In this activity, participants were asked to review a list of issues that they think need to be addressed in Red Bank, indicate the top three issues that were most important to them, and explain why. The top five themes reported on during the presentation were revitalization, new development standards, parks and open space, traffic, and walking, biking, and transit.

Question 3

How well do these themes capture your priorities for Red Bank?



Response	Count
Very Well	11
Mostly	13
Somewhat	4
My priorities are not reflected	0
<i>Total Respondents</i>	<i>28</i>

Question 4

What was missing?

Response
access to water. It's use.
Also focus groups were not inclusive or adequate
concerns for the historic fabric
echoing school space issues
Gentrification
Historic Preservation and Affordable Housing
I would have liked to hear more about priorities 6 and 7.
It's hard for me to review this info in an online presentation. When can we see the report?
Most views were from a self-selected audience. Priorities were determined by consultants. There is also a very big picture being ignored
No problem!
Not enough homeowner outreach and input.
school space issues
senior housing to keep our people in town

So that was a lot very fast, and I may have missed it, but I don't think I heard a lot about housing affordability.

Sunset Ave park is contaminated

the fact that developers are coming from out of town who have no relationship to RB nor the general area. we DO NOT need more development!

access to water. It's use.

Also focus groups were not inclusive or adequate

concerns for the historic fabric

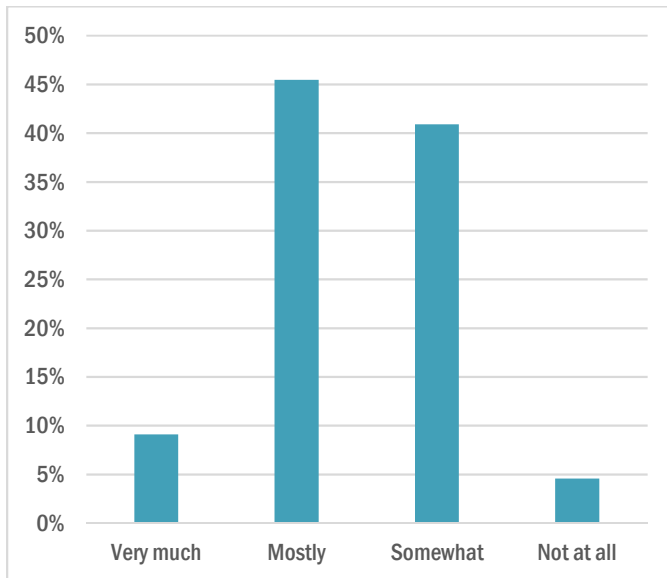
Activity 2: Great Ideas

In this activity, participants were asked to submit ideas they had for policies, projects, or programs that would make Red Bank better. They were then shown other participants' ideas and asked to like ideas that they agreed with. The top five idea were:

Likes	Category	Idea
47	Walking, Biking, and Transit	Development of a Riverwalk from Marine Park along the Navesink to Sunset Av along the Swimming river.
46	Affordable Housing	Bring in an Affordable Housing Developer who can use their expertise to build apartments for people who are not already rich.
37	Local Environment	Better management of vacant land like "Azalea Gardens" or Riverview Hospital's lots on the south side of Front St so they do not devolve into chronic eye-sores.
36	Economic Vitality	Attract more small businesses, art studios, and unique retailers. Close Broad street for walking plaza
33	New Development Standards	Enforce density and zoning laws that have been put in place for a reason! Do not allow NJTransit to lease parking lots to a developer who will build a massive apt building. Need more parking, not less

Question 5

Participants were then asked, "Do you agree that these Great Ideas would improve Red Bank?"



Response	Count
Very Well	2
Mostly	10
Somewhat	9
My priorities are not reflected	1
Total Respondents	22

Question 6

Are there any critical Great Ideas that we did not mention?

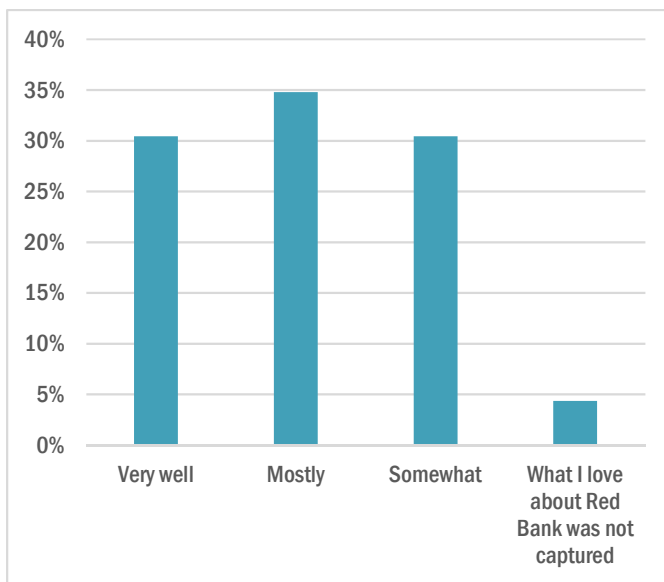
Response
Accessory Dwelling Units
Better leadership
Center the bikers and pedestrians
Higher density around train station is a good idea
Make it harder for the Zoning and Planning Boards to grant variances.
More community gardens accessible to all
Need a sunset regulation where developers given variances but never build, are required to get new approvals after a to be specified period of time. Deve
other transit options especially for seniors, eg, shuttle/trolley
our diversity is our treasure. stop gentrification
our seniors and lower income families are forced out
Pedestrian safety, less density, traffic calming in residential neighborhoods, cleanliness
Smaller homes for seniors that are interspersed throughout the town
The priorities can be interpreted many ways.
the town is already over developed - more attention to what we already have - plant trees/flowers in the vacant lots, instead of looking for new developers
Too many negative assumptions about development.
We have some great parks, but they are not maintained, all the new landscaping around broad and white streets are not being maintained
Yeah... Leadership...

Activity 3: Love It or Change It

In this activity, participants were asked to look at a map of Red Bank and indicate places that they loved or places that they would like to see changed. They were then asked to explain their choice. The top three areas with the most concentrated “love” comments were Marine Park, Riverside Gardens, and Broad Street. The top three areas with the most concentrated “change” comments were Hackensack Meridian Health, Maple Avenue, Front Street and Water Street, and the Gateway to Red Bank at Rector Place and Bridge Avenue.

Question 7

After viewing a map of the highest density clusters of “loved” locations and reading quotes about those locations, participants were asked, “How well do these locations and themes capture what you love about Red Bank?”



Response	Count
Very Well	7
Mostly	8
Somewhat	7
What I love about Red Bank was not captured	1
Total Respondents	23

Question 8

Is there anything critical that we did not mention?

Response
Broad street businesses aren't accessible to working class members. It's covered in puke on a Sunday morning.
Climate change and other global issues
I love the diversity of our residents, I'd love to see more connection between the Broad St and Shrewsbury Ave business districts
Maple Cove is the only water access available
marine park and the old tennis courts - the story around these areas is a disgrace - the tennis courts should be brought back - they were used by the entire community, not just a select few!
More density means more congestion
Shrewsbury A e serves residents not visitors yeah! Broad St is for tourists.
Shrewsbury Avenue should be just as vital as Broad Street

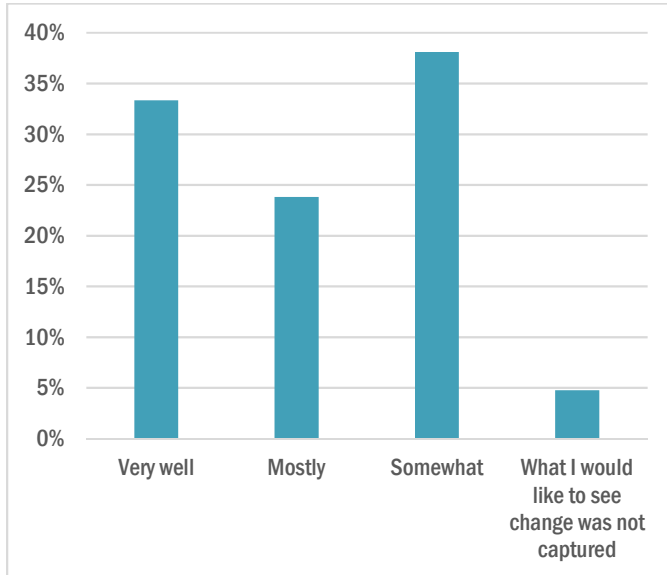
The arts & culture aspect

the diversity aspect making it available to all

Things that are not a place: diversity, education, small-town feel, variety of commercial areas.

Question 9

After viewing a map of the highest density clusters of locations that participants thought should change and reading quotes about those locations, participants were asked, "How well do these locations and themes capture what you would like to see change in Red Bank?"



Response	Count
Very Well	7
Mostly	5
Somewhat	8
What I would like to see change was not captured	1
Total Respondents	21

Question 10

Is there anything critical that we did not mention?

Response

2nd Broad and Newman Springs railroad crossing

Eliminate train overlay zone

Every development should include consideration of pedestrians and cyclists.

Every residential street is pretty much a cut through and no police presence

gateway to Red Bank from the south and the west

Hospital overlay must stay on north side of front street. hospital should share water access with Boro since they don't pay taxes

Implementation of "Complete Streets"

Leighton ave is a cut through. Speeds need to be reduced

More murals in intersections

Shrewsbury Ave has a multicultural attraction

Shrewsbury Ave is more vibrant than Broad

Shrewsbury Avenue should be just as vibrant as Broad

side-street safety near downtown; using one-ways etc for pedestrian safety

The 1995 Master Plan called for containing the growth of the hospital, we need guidance from professional planners like you to help this town achieve this goal. It should not be abandoned.

the highway district needs to be included

The hospital is an asset to the town.

The intersection/train crossing at Broad and Newman Springs Rd

Small Area Plans

The project team provided an overview of the small area plans at Sunset Park, Riverside Avenue/Route 35 Gateway, and the hospital area.

Sunset Park

Question 11

After reviewing background information on the Sunset Park site, participants were asked, "Is there anything else you would like the Team to know or consider about the Sunset Park site?"

Response

A community garden perhaps?

Brownfield monies are available from the Federal Govt to help remediate this area, the Boro should be on top of that.

Gentrification is making this a priority now. Waterfront access needs to be maintained for low income residents.

Great plan constantly eroded

Haven't completed Marine Park and that plan was completed. need to prioritize projects.

how much will it cost for remediation? access road exist already from primary school.

I appreciate the recognition that this is an issue of equity and should be a priority.

I'd like to see a riverwalk starting there.

just curious, but why wasn't Marine Park area considered a high priority? this is an area that would be used by a wide group of people, not just a small group around the sunset park, which is a wonderful plan, however.....

Move the recycling center which is an incompatible use.

need an easement on salvation army property to provide community connectivity for residents along Newman Springs Road, etc.

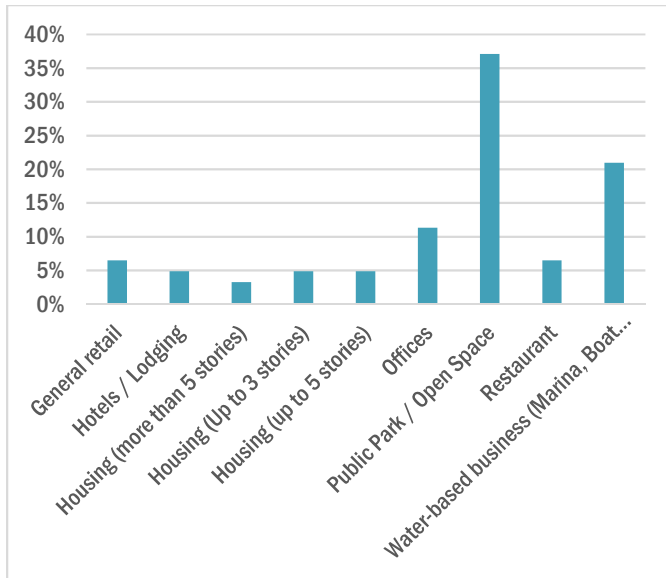
Need for water access

What is the DPW plan to relocate recycling and the truck storage?

Riverside Avenue/Route 35 Gateway

Question 12

After reviewing background information on the Gateway area and the 80 Rector Place site, participants were asked, "Assuming that traffic impacts could be addressed, what land uses would you support on the former gas station site at 80 Rector Place?"



Response	Count
General retail	4
Hotels / Lodging	3
Housing (more than 5 stories)	2
Housing (Up to 3 stories)	3
Housing (up to 5 stories)	3
Offices	7
Public Park / Open Space	23
Restaurant	4
Water-based business (Marina, Boat Club)	13
Grand Total	62

Question 13

Participants were then asked, "Is there anything else you would like the Team to know or consider about the 80 Rector Place site?"

Response

A major traffic pattern change would have to take place for that property to be used; it can only be accessed if coming south from Middletown.

almost anything that wouldn't require more cars/parking - what's wrong with an open space, with NO buildings of any kind!!!

Can it be connected under the bridge? Bad spot for egress there.

Gateway...cannot be solved in isolation from the rest of the chaotic traffic problems in the rest of RB. The gas station site is necessary for road realignment

How do you safely access on foot for open space

I am always hesitant for eminent domain to be exercised, but the gas station site would be best served in the Boro taking it back for a Public Use after remediation - perhaps nature preserve

Let's put in a traffic circle there.

Needs to be good for the people and the planet, environmentally sustainable

Pedestrian bridge over 35 to a park

safe access by foot and bicycle

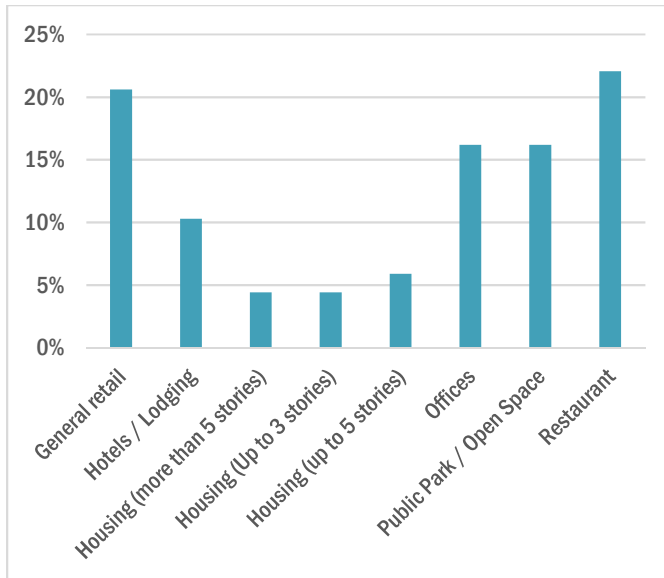
That land is contaminated and housing cannot be built on it

The Mayor let the hotel proposal expire. There was an approval by the planning board

Would make a great intercept parking lot! Maybe too scenic for that.

Question 14

After reviewing background information on the 187 Riverside Avenue site, participants were asked, "Assuming that traffic impacts could be addressed, what land uses would you support on the former gas station site at 187 Riverside Avenue?"



Response	Count
General retail	14
Hotels / Lodging	7
Housing (more than 5 stories)	3
Housing (Up to 3 stories)	3
Housing (up to 5 stories)	4
Offices	11
Public Park / Open Space	11
Restaurant	15
Grand Total	68

Question 15

Participants were then asked, "Is there anything else you would like the Team to know or consider about the 187 Riverside Ave site?"

Response

Also great for intercept parking. Pair with a shuttle or bikeshare.

Can we require landowners to remediate now, rather than letting the contamination seep?

Cannabis Retail, Dog Park

Could an EV charging parking lot be put in?

Housing with a public green space

It could also become a place for a zip car like site

It needs a better aesthetic, it's the first thing you see coming into town

micro retail spaces similar to what appears as a future project at Sickles on Monmouth St

Office and commercial will put destination traffic into conflict with through travel - safety issue

Part of the traffic circle.

Sculpture park

Small lot demands small building

The whole area isn't well set up as a gateway. It feels high speed and confusing coming south on 35.

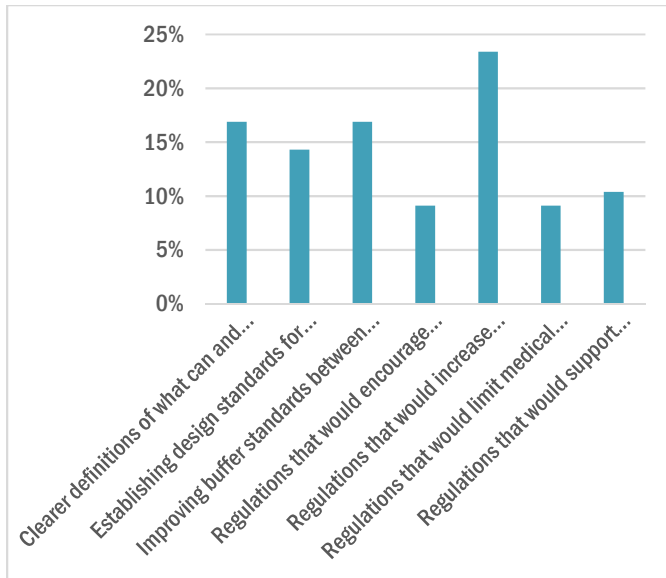
what about just another gas station, since it would take years to remediate the site

would be a great location for a bank branch with drive through teller

Hospital Area

Question 16

After reviewing background information on the Hospital Area, participants were asked, "What efforts would you support in Hospital Small Area?"



Response	Count
Clearer definitions of what can and cannot be built	13
Establishing design standards for new construction	11
Improving buffer standards between residential and non-residential areas	13
Regulations that would encourage affordable housing development	7
Regulations that would increase waterfront access	18
Regulations that would limit medical office / outpatient construction	7
Regulations that would support construction of off-street parking	8
Grand Total	77

Question 17

Participants were then asked, "Is there anything else you would like the Team to know or consider about the Hospital Small Area?"

Response
gain as much water access as possible. Take advantage of the location with proximity to the water.
Hospital tax free expansion needs to be stopped
How many employees actually live in Red Bank.
If the hospital needs more parking, they should build it on the property they already own.
It isn't porous at all to the community, and it eats a giant chunk of the waterfront.
Please reserve some time for questions and comments.
Stop expansion.
Tax them.
the hospital is a corporation and should pay taxes
The Hospital should be made to use their space better...giant surface parking lot in the center of their lot
The hospital should remain within their district as zoned and should be responsible for preserving the historic fabric of our town
The zoning in this area needs to be very specific and very defined
We need to aggressively define the town's relationship to the hospital. They are consuming more and giving less

We need to foster a better relationship with the hospital.

Why do we care about hospital parking needs?

Will there be a limitation on how much property the hospital can buy?

Chat

During the presentation, the chat was available for attendees to ask questions and state comments. These questions were not answered directly during the presentation. Below are the questions received.

- When can we see the full Red Bank Today report? Is there a plan to get resident feedback on that report?
- The survey was biased, Only accessible to people who have digital skills, access. I don't know anyone who was invited too a focus group.
- Resident input is critical, how will you gather input and feedback?
- "Please keep your comments to 200 characters or fewer..." That was the first problem with the "Public Workshop"
- Note about parking and transit: we, the residents don't need parking because we can walk, but the businesses and outsiders want more of it in the downtown.
- The survey is only accessible to younger people. That is reflected in the priorities.
- DEP remediation is needed on both sites
- That corner would make a good transportation hub: visitor center, shuttle or valet service for folks coming into town, some parking
- Transit hub... great idea
- The hospital is infringing on the Washington St. Historic District and tearing down historic homes in the original residential district of 19th century Red Bank
- Yes, need to preserve this historic corridor
- More cookie cutter hospital buildings. Either up the design/architecture or go to Denmark to learn how to design hospitals.

Questions & Answer Session

Following the presentation, the project team opened the floor for attendees to make comments and ask questions. Below are summaries of the comments and questions received and answers provided. Comments and responses are not copied verbatim.

Comment 1

When will the 80-page Red Bank Today document be available? Will we have an opportunity to give feedback before it is finalized?

Susan Favate (BFJ) responded that the draft report will be posted on the website after the meeting so that the public can review it and provide comments. She added that it will not be finalized until it is incorporated into the Master Plan document which will be closer to the end of the calendar year.

Comment 2

What are your plans for incorporating historic preservation? Have you or will you be speaking to the Historic Preservation Committee, especially for the hospital zone?

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that the project team did meet with representatives of the Historic Preservation Committee and spoke about the hospital area.

Comment 3

I live on Bodman Place, which is a one-way street and there is a proposal for an apartment building there. Are there any plans to have another way to enter and exit the street?

Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) responded that the project team knows about the issue. He explained that Bodman Place is a state-controlled road, so the developer is committed to putting in an application to the DOT for a stoplight at the intersection. He noted that it is unclear whether the DOT will approve the application because of the proximity of the street to another stop-controlled intersection. He added that project team will be studying the area and looking to either support the application for a stop-controlled intersection or look for alternative solutions.

Comment 4

I want you to be aware that Maple Cove, at the bottom of Maple Avenue used to be a dump and the residents came together to save it from development. Now it is a great pocket park that is on the Green Acres list. It is the only public access to the Navasink River where you can hand launch a non-motorized boat and spend time by the water.

Susan Favate (BJF) thanked the attendee for their comment.

Comment 5

First, I want to reiterate that the format of this meeting and the online survey excludes many residents who do not have the skills or access to participate. I work at the library and have been handing out flyers and encouraging people who use computers to fill out the survey. Many people were frustrated and gave up. That point really skews data to a certain demographic. Second, I know that many people on the call tonight are very active in the community, and I do not know any of them who were involved in the focus groups. I am shocked that you are moving on to drawing conclusions and so many of us have been excluded from this process. The fact that historic preservation and environmental quality is not in the top five priorities is appalling to me. The process has excluded people in terms of age, income level, and education level.

Anyone on the planet can fill out that survey. I know you asked for zip code, but people can lie. I think you should limit it to residents and property owners because why should someone else be able to set the direction of the town.

The survey priorities could be interpreted in many different ways. When we rely on private developers to solve affordable housing problems, we are asking them to build thousands of high-price units to meet our fair share housing obligation. If I picked affordable housing as a priority, I would prefer to see it as small homes not high-density housing, but I do not get the opportunity to express that when filling out the survey. Using words like placemaking does not mean anything to anyone who is not in the planning field. What it means is displacement which is what is going on here.

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that there will be more opportunities for the community to provide input in the fall. She clarified that the Master Plan is not yet being drafted, the

document that is currently in draft form is Red Bank today which is an existing condition report for the Borough. Ryan Walsh (FHI Studio) added that the challenge of reaching deep into the community is one that the project team took very seriously. Survey respondent demographics were tracked, and the project team tailored additional outreach to communities that were not well represented. He thanked the commentor for the help that they provided at the library and let them know that if they had additional ideas the project team would love to hear them.

Comment 6

Are any of you residents of Red Bank? In your experience, what is the end result of the Master Plan? The town comes up with a Master Plan, how often is it followed? How often are recommendations followed through on? In other town it turns out that significant parts of the plan were ignored. How do these Master Plans become an effective tool to get the plan executed as intended?

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that none of the project team is residents of Red Bank but that a good portion of the team is in within 45 minutes of the Borough and had some familiarity with the area already. In regard to the questions about the Master Plan, she added that it often depends on what the Master Plan is recommending. If the Master Plan is recommending a set of policies, then those are policies that the Borough should be following and if they are not, then the Borough is opening itself up to legal challenge. On the regulation side, if there are changes to zoning and similar regulations being recommended, then those should be undertaken by the Borough as soon as possible. Recommendations in the Master Plan may also suggest infrastructure improvements and adopting those are going to be a function of funding and the priorities of the Borough.

Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) noted that the Master Plan is a guiding document that is looking out 10 years. He said there can be a sense that the plan is not being enacted or moving forward but part of that has to do with the slow-moving process of changing infrastructure in the United States. He added that is always helpful to record big ideas in the Master Plan to help make it more likely that when grant funding becomes available, the town may be competitive for those kinds of projects.

Comment 7

Thank you for an informative forum. Could you connect the dots between a Vision Plan, a Strategic Plan, and a Master Plan? Are we putting the cart before the horse because we are not doing a Vision Plan and Strategic Plan first? Which plan will come first? Does the Borough need to not only look at Master Planning but also the sub-elements like historic elements, or bike and pedestrian elements?

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that the Master Plan is a combination of visioning, planning, and strategy. The Master Plan process is grounded in a vision derived through community engagement and existing conditions analysis. Next come recommendations and then strategies are the outcome of the Master Plan. Communities can develop stand-alone Strategic Plans, but they tend to not be grounded in vision and policy. In the final Master Plan document, visioning will be covered early on, then existing conditions, and then concluding with action-oriented strategies.

Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) added that there does not have to be a separate Strategic Plan. There will be larger projects that may need their own Strategic Plans, for example the Sunset Park project, and that is part of what is being covered in the Small Area plans which are part of the larger Master Plan.

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that one of the benefits of Master Planning in New Jersey is that individual elements may be updated at later dates, for example a parks and open space element or a circulation element. This Master Plan will not solve every issue, it will identify problem areas and areas that are in need of more in-depth study. There may be a need to do stand-alone element updates as they are more complex and may require further study.

Comment 8

In the previous Master Plan, the hospital was supposed to stay on the North Side of Front Street, but it has since encroached on the historical residential neighborhood. The hospital is buying up properties that were once taxable and now are no longer. We have to keep them off of Spring Street and off of Washington Street. The people that work there that live in Red Bank are very few. Please reduce their encroachment, they own many properties along the river and are tearing down houses and leaving vacant lots.

Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) responded that well known to the project team that hospital butts right up against these historical residential areas. This creates a lot of opportunity for tensions. In the project team's conversations with the hospital they recognize that as well. He noted that the Borough cannot legally control the purchase, sale, or exchange of property. What the Borough can do is control what can be built based on zoning and providing incentives and disincentives. He added that it is important to recognize that some hospital employees do live in the Borough and that commuting employees and visitors to the hospital do contribute to the tax base through commerce in Red Bank. He concluded by reiterating that the project team will be giving the hospital area special attention through a Small Area plan in the Master Plan.

Comment 9

I am interested in knowing how the Master Plan will affect our zoning ordinances. We have very liberal granting of variances. Many of us live adjacent to parking lots with stadium lights and dumpsters on property lines. How will the Master Plan help us gain back some of these residential areas by eliminating some parking lots and protect what we have left?

Susan Favate (BJF) responded that the zoning by law has to follow the Master Plan but zoning does not get automatically updated once the Master Plan is adopted. There does have to be a next step of the governing body taking up any recommended zoning changes. People will always have the ability to seek variances. However, if there are variances that are being granted over and over again and creating ongoing problems the project team will look what can be done to mitigate those issues.

Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) added that communities like Red Bank that are growing quickly do not always have current zoning that accounts for that. He reminded attendees to email the Kelsey Kahn (FHI Studio) (kkahn@fhistudio.com) with specific locations and examples of additional comments so that they can be investigated further.