

Vision Plan for Downtown & Lakeside Improvements

Hightstown, New Jersey

September 30, 2015





In your words:

*“Recognize that Peddie Lake is Hightstown’s
Central Park – treat it as such”*

“Design a plan that is visionary for the town”

“Make the town a destination”

Planning Process & Schedule

- **Kick-off meeting with Downtown Hightstown (April 23)**
- **Stakeholder Focus Groups (May 12)**
- **Community Open House Workshop (May 26)**
- **Design Charrette (May 27-28)**
- **Final Presentation (May 29)**

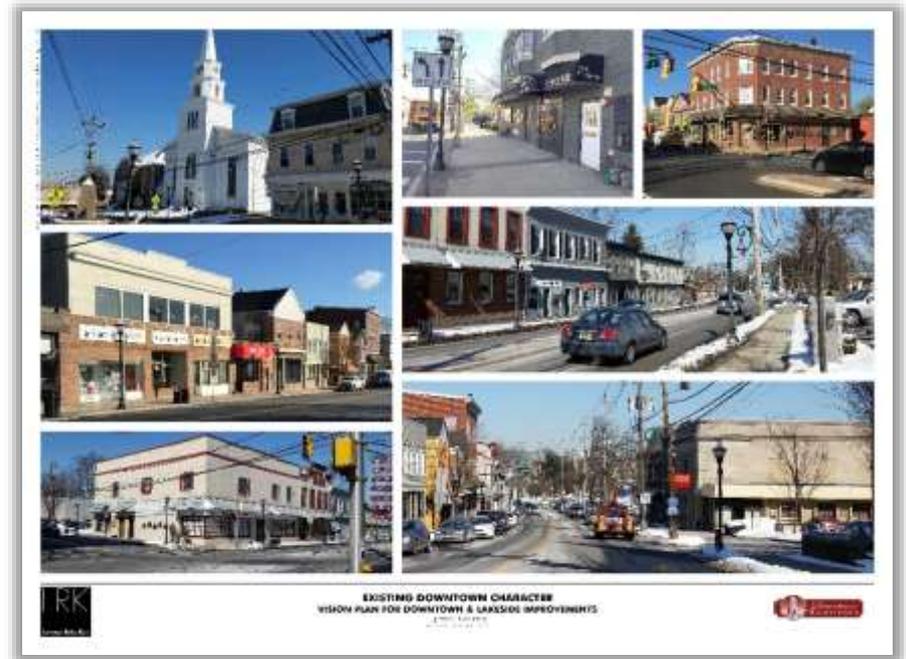
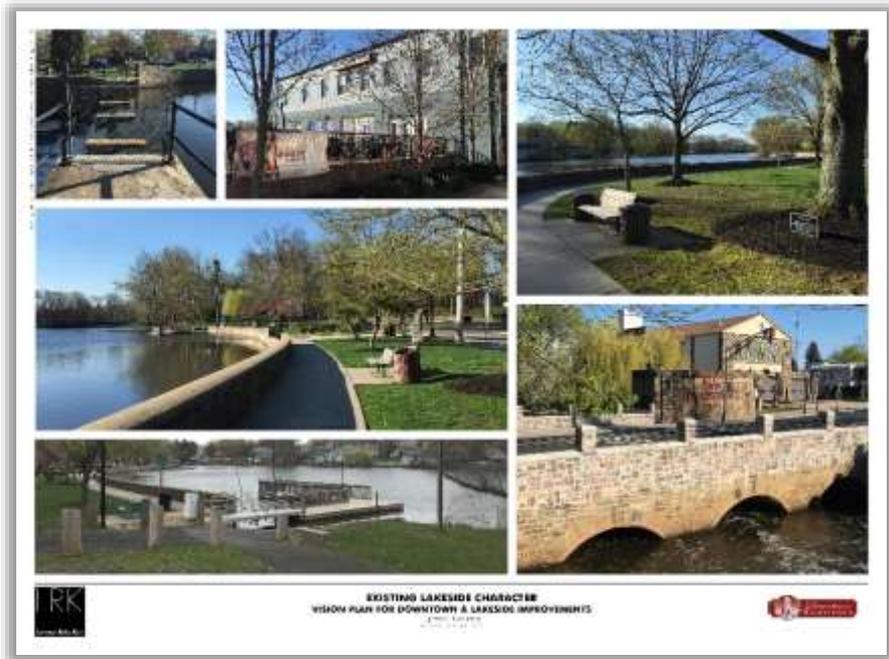
Focus Area

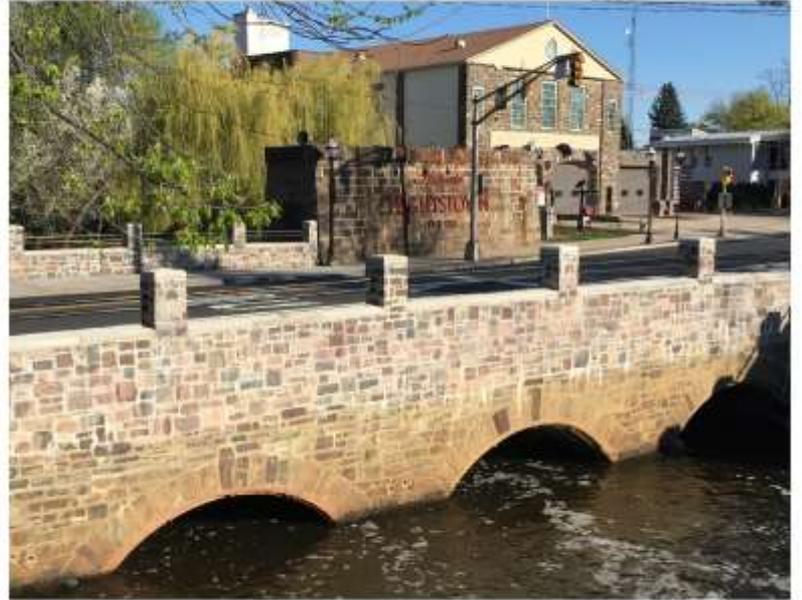


Project Goals

- How can we create the most unique and attractive “downtown waterfront experience” in the region?
- How can downtown become a more vibrant destination with a greater variety of uses, features and activities?
- How should improvements be designed to reflect our history and act as a catalyst for future reinvestment throughout the downtown?

Tell Us About Downtown Today





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**EXISTING LAKESIDE CHARACTER
VISION PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN & LAKESIDE IMPROVEMENTS**

Hightstown, New Jersey
REVISED 12/15/2014 - 12/15/2014



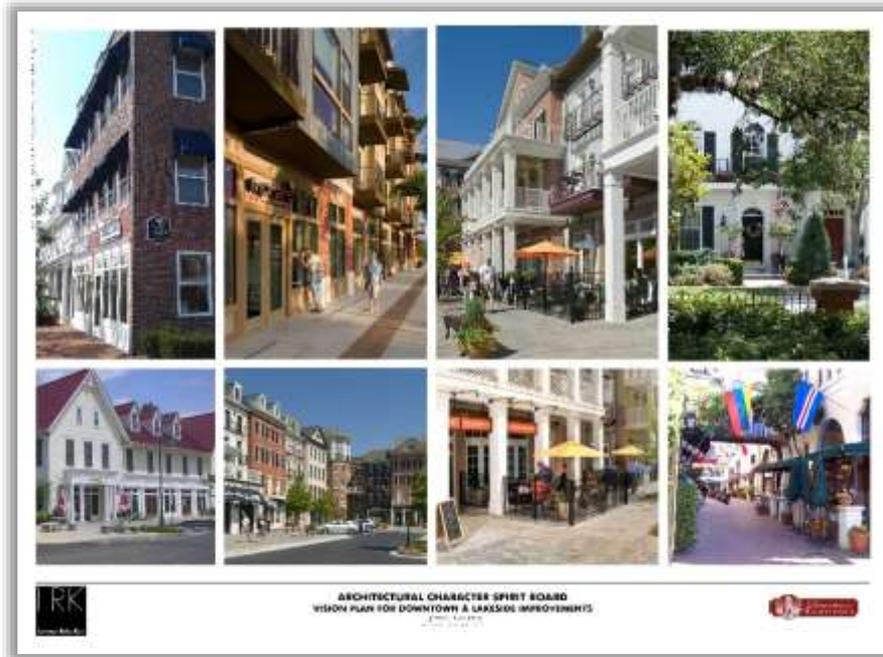


EXISTING DOWNTOWN CHARACTER
VISION PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN & LAKESIDE IMPROVEMENTS

Hightstown, New Jersey
 08520-0001 • 609-426-1200 • 01/15/2010



Brainstorm "Big Ideas" for Focus Area





COMMUNITY OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP – May 26

VISIONING WORKSHOP FOR DOWNTOWN & LAKESIDE IMPROVEMENTS

Hightstown Borough, Mercer County

GIVE US YOUR IDEAS.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT!

OPEN HOUSE WORKSHOP

Drop in Any Time Between
4:00 PM - 8:00 PM
TUESDAY MAY 26, 2015

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH
125 S. Main Street
Hightstown, NJ 08520
(Enter from parking lot or rear entrance)

Free refreshments will be provided
Parking in rear or on local streets.

- Tell us where you **live** and **work**.
- Tell us about the **downtown today**.
- Take the **Community Vision Survey**.
- Help shape the Vision for a “downtown waterfront experience.”
- Tell us how Peddie Lake can become a unique waterfront – give us your **thoughts, ideas & concepts**.
- **Kid's Corner** – we want residents of all ages to draw ideas for what would make the waterfront a cool place.



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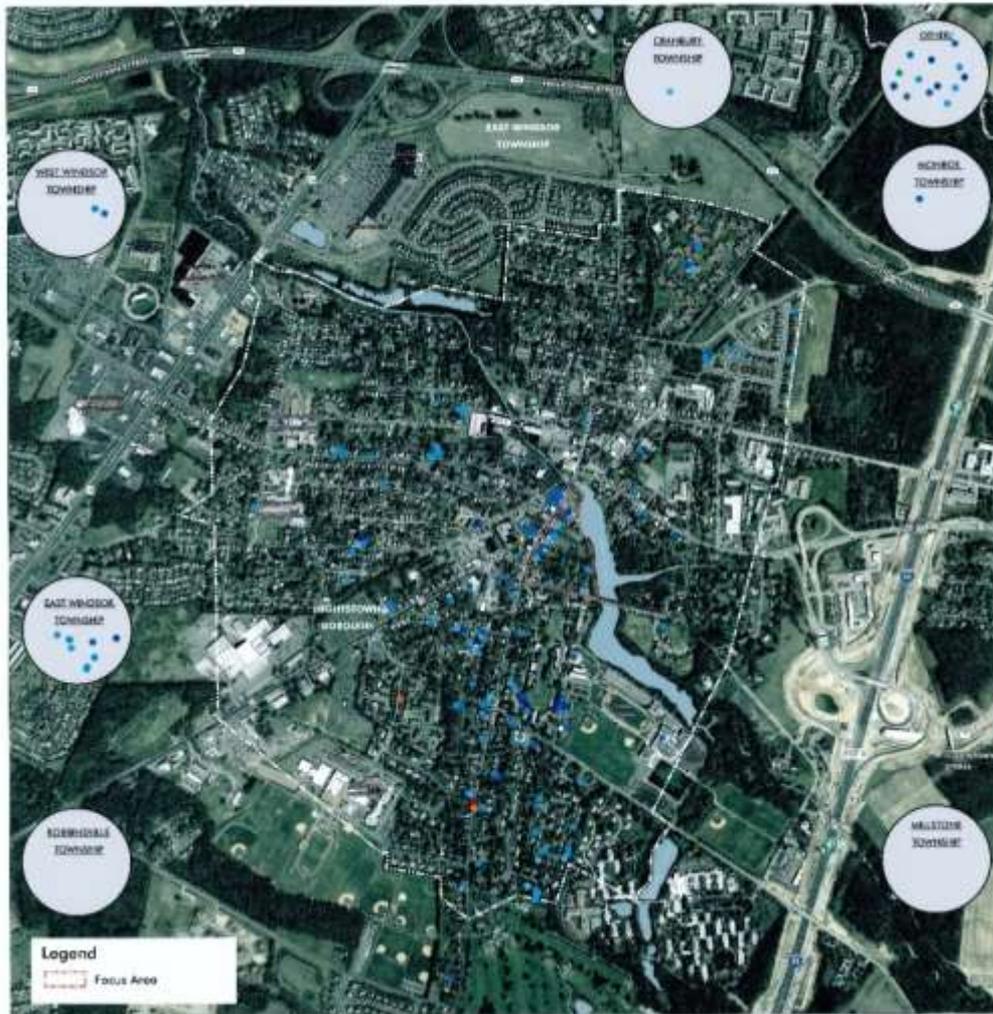


www.downtownhightstown.org



Where do you **Live** in the Downtown or Region?

Where do you **Work** in the Downtown or Region?



Where do you
Live/Work
in the
Downtown or
Region?

What places do you like **MOST** in the Downtown?



What places do you like **LEAST** in the Downtown?



DOT-MOCRACY - LIKE MOST LIKE LEAST
VISION PLAN FOR DOWNTOWN & LAKESIDE IMPROVEMENTS



What Places do you like Most/Least in Downtown?



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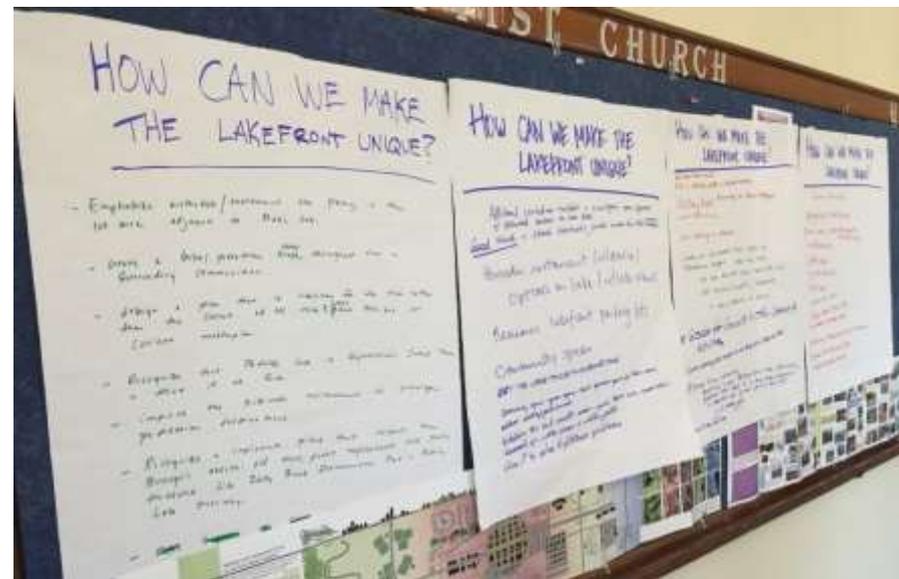


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HOW CAN WE MAKE THE LAKEFRONT UNIQUE?

- Canoe/Kayak races along the lake
- European walk way connecting restaurants/
Cafés.
- ^{Build} ~~PARKING DECK~~ - Remove parking lot. HIDE PARKING DECK
BEHIND NEW FACADES FACING MAIN STREET
- BUILD WALKWAYS OVER PEDDIE LAKE
- ELEVATED WALKWAY FOLLOWING OLD RAILROAD RIGHT OF WAY,
ALA Highline in NYC
- TRAIN SCULPTURE ON TOP OF STONE BUTTRES AT INTERSECTION
OF MAIN & FRANKLIN.

PERFORMANCE ART SPACES

Box → Hour BAR

- make the public parking lots a public park/picnic area

Permanent built-in musical instruments (xylophone, percussion, piano,
etc.)

Emphasize aesthetics / environment over parking in the lot area adjacent to Peddie Lake.

- Create a ^{route /} ~~trike~~ pedestrian ^{scape} throughout town + surrounding communities
- design a plan that is visionary for the town rather than the current ad hoc mode of ^{design} that describes our current master plan.
- Recognize that Peddie Lake is Hightstown's Central Park + treat it as such.
- improve the business environment to encourage pedestrian destinations.
- Recognize + implement plans that respect the Borough's assets: old trees, pocket neighborhoods, local parks, treasures like Rocky Brook Environmental Park + Peddie Lake Greenway...

HOW CAN WE MAKE THE WATERFRONT UNIQUE?

- MOVE PARKING LOT FROM WATER FRONT TO THE OLD MUNICIPAL BLDG.

Remove walls around lake

ACTIVATE ENTIRE LAKE

- move parking lot to the mill
- improve mill - (Art, music, ect.)

- MOVE PARKING AWAY FROM WATERFRONT.
- ELIMINATE FLOW OF TRUCK TRAFFIC THRU DOWNTOWN.
- MORE RESIDENTIAL + SHOPPING + DINING TO ENJOY THE WATERFRONT VIEW.

* Put BACK ~~at~~ Rt. hand turn lane in front of Allent Streets

* Please consider other side of walking Bridge in development plans.

Provide a reason to cross bridge - restaurant / shops etc. - MAKE TOWN A DESTINATION

• more trees on S Main St / downtown

* MAKE BAPTIST CHURCH BOROUGH HALL

* If Tavern on the Lake had good food and fewer loud drunks outside

→ BED & BREAKFAST / INN

* NICE 2 BR CONDOS

• Keep large thru-traffic trucks from center of this small town... make it a village, with walk happy streets. Use the by-pass!

* Create a reliable shuttle (traily) runng for Hightstam to and from train.

Utilize for more events - food festival; craft beer festival, etc.

"along the water" cafes

walking downtown; parky outside of main st area

Family Movie Night - Along the lake
early morning markets

water view dining + music

IMPROVE THE SHORE-LINE w/ STONE FEATURES + WATER ACCESS

TIE IN LOCAL HISTORY TO ALL WE DO - GRIST MILL THEMED RESTAURANTS, ELEVATED WALKWAY TRAINTRACKS, PUBLIC ART OF LOCOMOTIVES, ETC.

Span the creek, extend into the Lake w/ "piers" for dining/recreation.

MORE "GREENSPY"

Ride-able model trains (12" gauge)

Model John Bull

Movie in the park events more often

classic/
independent
films
+ kids movies +
teen movies

* Convert Bank into Breyer
(Vault in Yardby, PA)

Improve outdoor dining experience

encourage small business/retail - tax abatement?

PUBLIC ART

LENDING LIBRARY

Permanent games. chess/deckers/ping pong/bocce

Public Pool

Public Music/instruments

Lots of icecream shops w/ lots of flavors!!

HIDE/BURY PARKING.

Food truck events - competitions, etc.

Water Park

- Upscale coffee shop with outdoor seating
- Regular cultural events (bi-weekly/weekly)
+ fair + farmer markets
- Night events - "take back the night"
- maximize water view experiences
- Trim grass, weed, collect garbage (regularly)... maybe "adopt a spot" program. A crosswalk from parking lot to restaurant, so businesses can be supported, encouraged, enjoyed! Finish the bridge?

* more welcoming lakefront presence & activities at lake

- Landscaping / Finish Green Space Walk / Feature the Lake through developing Beach / Tavern stretch
- Improve signage - Not just a "Great Mash"

BUILD A PLAYGROUND

* PUBLIC ART WATER FEATURE - WATER WHEEL, FIRE/WATER SCULPTURE ON THE LAKE REPRESENTING THE GROSS BROTHERS FLOUR MILL FIRE

REMOVE WELLS FARGO BANK & THEO'S RESTAURANT

- upscale shops
- flea market area

Casino on the Lake

pergolas + chess boards.

Picnic area (area restaurants
sell boxed lunches)

Paddleboats

Coffee Shop

Splash fountain

tiki bar

Walkway Ward to Main St.

Good Rest. (Ethnic Rest.)

OLD FASHION ICE CREAM PARLOR

Additional small restaurants / - a Coffee Shop

Gateway treatments to mark boundaries

Gourmet Food / Take out - OLIVES.

Make it a fun place to visit

Brewery

bring back some mills / industry

Add More Places to eat.

Put in Athletic spots. i.e. Volleyball, horseshoe, ...

Volleyball * Currently In Residents Backyards.

Retain the contemplative nature of the lake. Add some public art.

Ice skating in season

• CREATE AN ENVIRONMENT THAT CATERES TO PEDESTRIAN TRAFFIC ... KEEP CARS AWAY

- USE THIS AREA FOR PUBLIC ACTIVITIES LIKE ART DISPLAY (SCULPTURE), PERFORMANCE

- IT SHOULD BECOME A GATEWAY!

* Gazebo for Concerts & Other Community Activities

- Consider expanding Ethel McKnight and Move Borough Hall to Rodgers and Black

- ~~R~~ Make some practical decisions about Borough Hall & the associated parking lots - that is a truly under-utilized & ill conceived use of that prime space. *TRUE

A. I totally agree

- more trees, less trees.

Additional outdoor tables + courtyard open spaces
w/ elevated sections to view lake
Good Food + street festivals, public screen for film ^{outdoor} Series

Broader restaurant (w/service)

Options on lake / w/lake views

Remember lakefront parking lots

Community spaces.

~~GET~~ THE LARGE TRUCKS TO GO AROUND TOWN

Community space - green space - small sprinkler park for kids - more
outdoor seating/places to eat

Whatever the end result, make sure there are conservation
easements for water access + walking paths.

Use it to solve Hightstown's problems.

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Downtown Lakefront - Today



Downtown Lakefront – A Century Ago



Downtown Lakefront 1915





GROSS BROS.
CEREAL MILL

RAILROAD HOTEL

PEDDIE
LAKE

1916



Railroad Hotel with Balcony

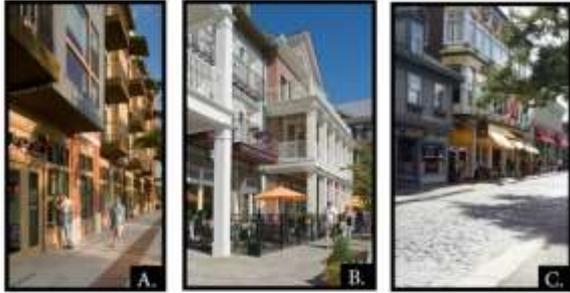


Tavern on the Lake

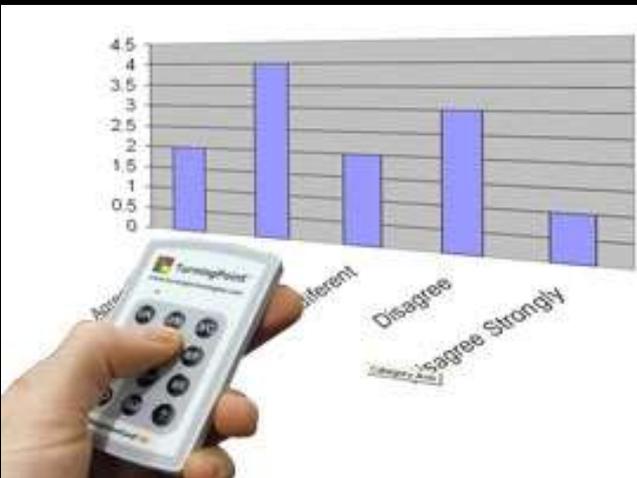
Main Street 100 years ago...



Community Vision Survey



D. None of the choices



"The survey was a great way to visualize what the town can look like."

The Waterfront Today



Waterfront Promenade



3%

None of the choices

Waterfront Dining



5% None of the choices

Activating the Waterfront



Activating the Waterfront

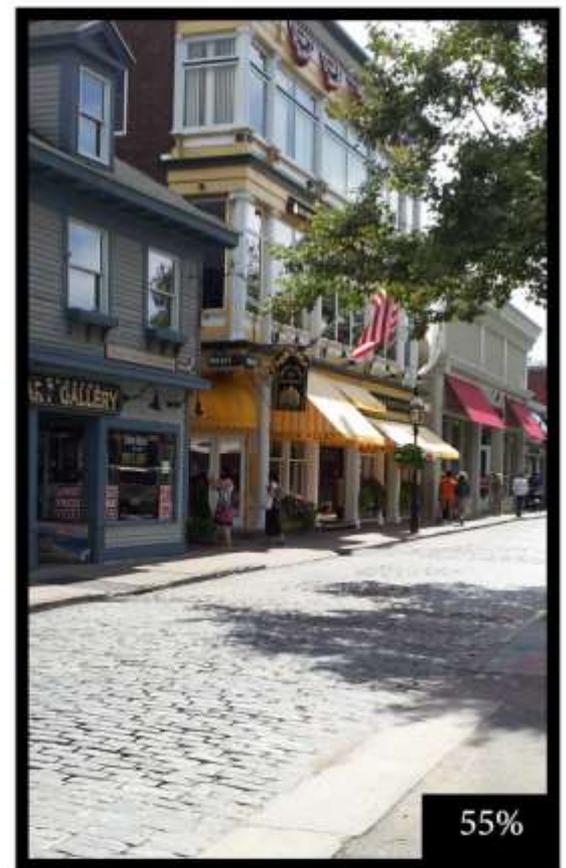


12% None of the choices

Framing the Waterfront



Framing the Waterfront



17% None of the choices

Filling in the Gaps



Filling in the Gaps

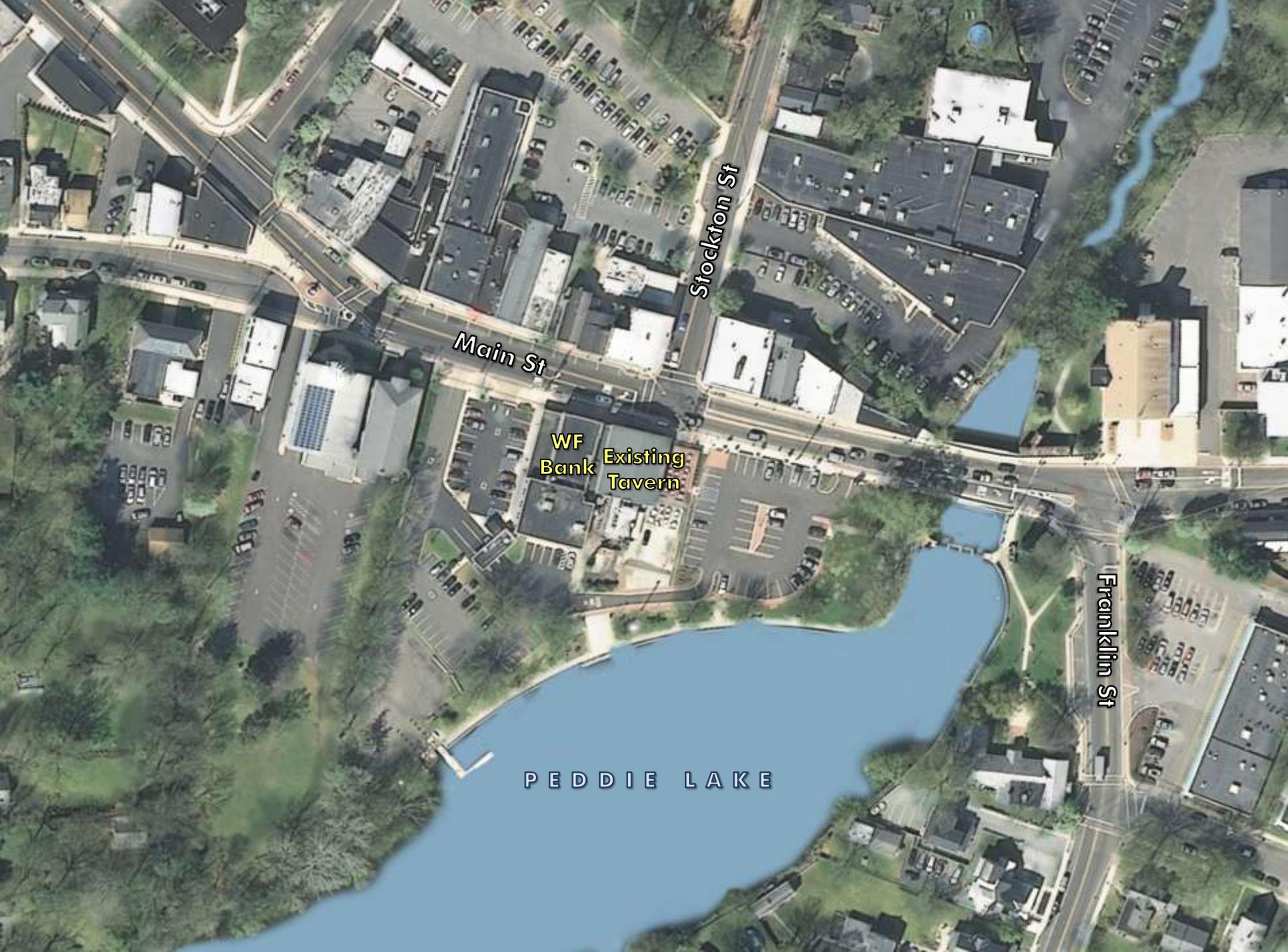


Filling in the Gaps



22% None of the choices

14% Leave the parking lot



Main St

Stockton St

Franklin St

WF Bank
Existing Tavern

PEDDIE LAKE



Stockton St

Main St

Franklin St

WF Bank
Existing Tavern

PEDDIE LAKE

“Span the creek, extend into the lake with “piers” for dining and recreation”

“Remove walls around the lake”

“Paddle boats”





*“Community space, green space,
small sprinkler space for kids,
outdoor seating, places to eat”*

*“Permanent games, chess,
checkers, ping pong, bocce”*



“Splash fountain”

“Use this area for public activities like art display (Sculpture), performance – it should become a gateway”



*“Gazebo
for
concerts”*



*“European walkway connecting
restaurants/cafes”*

*“Courtyard open spaces with
elevated sections to view lake”*

“Activate entire lake”



*“Good food, street festivals,
public screen for film,
outdoor service”*



*“Food truck events,
competitions, etc.”*

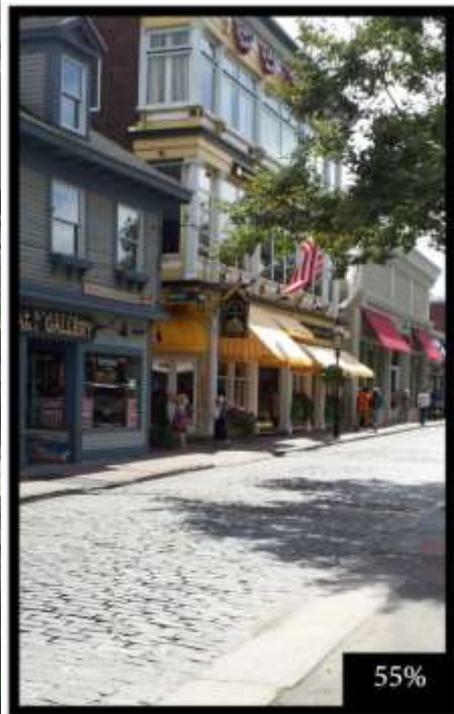
“Tiki bar”



*“Utilize for more events –
food festival, craft fair, etc.”*

“Family movie night – along the Lake”

“Night events – take back the night”



“Tie in local history to all we do – grist mill themed restaurants, elevated walkway train tracks, public art of locomotives, etc.”

“Public art waterfront feature water wheel, fire/water sculpture on the Lake representing the gross brothers flour mill fire”

How can our past inform our future?





Parking

“Emphasize aesthetics/ environment over parking adjacent to Peddie lake”

“Move parking away from the waterfront”

“Remove lakefront parking lots”

“Hide or bury the parking”



Stockton St

Main St

Franklin St

WF Bank
Existing Tavern

Potential
Shared
Parking

PEDDIE LAKE

Parking

*“Parking deck – remove parking lot.
Hide parking deck behind new
facades facing Main Street”*

*“Move parking lot from water front
to the old municipal building”*

“Move parking lot to the mill”



Stockton St

Main St

WF Bank

Potential Shared Parking

Franklin St

PEDDIE LAKE



Stockton St

Main St

Franklin St

PEDDIE LAKE

WF Bank

Podium Parking
(Under Building
and Plaza)

Potential
Shared
Parking

Uses

“More residential & shopping & dining to enjoy the waterfront view”

“Bed & Breakfast/Inn”

“Nice two bedroom condos”

Where are the **Safety Concerns** in the Downtown?

Where are the Traffic & Pedestrian **Hot Spots** in the Downtown?



Where are the Safety Concerns & Traffic/Pedestrian Hot Spots in Downtown?

Trucks & Thru-Traffic

“Keep large thru-traffic trucks from the center of this small town – make it a village with walk happy streets”

“Get the large trucks to go around town”

“Eliminate flow of thru traffic through downtown”

Pedestrian Crossing Challenges



Context Sensitive Design/Shared Spaces





Stockton St

Main St

Franklin St

WF Bank
Existing Tavern

Potential
Shared
Parking

PEDDIE LAKE



Stockton St

Main St

Franklin St

WF Bank
Existing Tavern

Potential
Shared
Parking

PEDDIE LAKE



Stockton St

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Other Areas





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