



Dwight Neighborhood Planning Update 2007

Yale Urban Design Workshop
Dwight Central Management Team
June 3, 2007

Dwight
Neighborhood
Planning Update
2007



Contents

Introduction

History of Dwight Planning



Great Neighborhood Streets

Concept

Edgewood Avenue

Whalley Avenue

Route 34 Connector



Issues

Education, Youth & Community

Open Space & Sustainability

Traffic & Safety

Housing & Economic Development

Neighborhood Character



Conclusion

Integrated Design

Action Items

Acknowledgements



Alvis Booker Building



Shaw's Plaza



Dwight School Addition

- GDDC Improvements
- Civic or Institutional Improvements
- New Haven Housing Services Gut Historic Rehabs
- Other Improvements

Introduction

History of Dwight Planning

In the spring of 1995, the Dwight Central Management Team (DCMT) began working with the Neighborhood Partnership Network (NPN) and the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW) to develop a Neighborhood Plan for Community Action. After a summer of studying the issues involved in the neighborhoods, the groups organized a 4-day community design workshop which was held at the Timothy Dwight School. During this 4-day charrette over 250 participants, including neighborhood residents, public officials and local community institutions, voiced their concerns and opinions about the neighborhood. The concerns, ideas and proposals presented at the charrette were collected and refined to produce a Neighborhood Plan.

In September of 1996 the Plan was released. Since that time the Dwight Neighborhood has made impressive progress towards many of the goals articulated in the Plan. Such accomplishments range from the development of the Greater Dwight Development Corporation (GDDC), a community development corporation with the capabilities to fundraise and manage the monies needed to improve the neighborhood, major improvements in safety, economic and social strength, housing as well as community wellness.

In addition to these kinds of improvements, the neighborhood has also produced an impressive array of important individual projects, such as the Shaw's Plaza, which is currently one of the most successful urban grocery complexes developed in the area, the construction of a much-

needed Dwight School Addition and furthermore the Alvis Booker Building on Edgewood Avenue which is home to the new Montessori School and the GDDC offices on Edgewood Avenue.

On July 28 & 29, 2007, Dwight residents and its leadership, in concert with the Yale Urban Design Workshop (YUDW), the City of New Haven, and local designers gathered again at the Dwight School for a second community design workshop intended to craft solutions for current problems as well as identifying new opportunities for neighborhood development. In the two-day event, concerned citizens once again discussed and sketched out possible options for their neighborhood. The event was organized around five general topics, summaries of

which appear in the following report.

Overall, this document will function as the updated Neighborhood Plan. However, what follows is not a conventional plan for the Dwight neighborhood in the sense that there are explicit benchmarks, time lines, or budgets. Rather, it is the diverse collection of concerns and potential solutions assembled by those present at the community design workshop, all framed in terms of the 'Great Neighborhood Streets' of Dwight. This document points toward a better Dwight, and hopes to spark the political and economic imagination needed to shape a path toward real action.

Great Neighborhood Streets

Concept

Because of the way Dwight and the City of New Haven have grown together, the neighborhood is defined in large part by four main east-west through streets: Chapel, Edgewood, Whalley, and the Route 34 Connector. Each of these streets has developed a unique character, and the plan suggests enhancing the function and aesthetics of each corridor.

With its connection to the museums, theaters, and eclectic retail shops to the east, Chapel Street might be re-imagined as the Arts Corridor. The Route 34 Connector could become a model of smart growth and environmentally sensitive development with its expansive open space and strong connection to the West

River wetlands. Whalley Avenue has always been a successful commercial strip, but the plan seeks ways to improve its blend of regional and local business.

Finally, Edgewood Avenue runs through the heart of Dwight, and is home to the Troup School, multiple day-care facilities, the Timothy Dwight School, and Yale University; suggesting it could be developed as an Education Corridor. Moreover, because of its central location and existing mix of residential, commercial, and recreational uses, Edgewood should become a safe, vibrant 'Main Street' for the whole neighborhood.



Aerial view of the Edgewood Corridor



Route 34 Green Mixed-Use Corridor

Chapel Street Arts and Business Corridor

Edgewood Avenue Educational Corridor

Whalley Avenue Commercial Corridor

Edgewood Avenue

Currently : Growing Pains for Main Street

Few doubt that Edgewood Avenue is the physical and social 'Main Street' of the Dwight neighborhood. With several schools and a handful of local businesses anchoring street life, Edgewood invites a relatively high volume of bike, automobile, and foot traffic.

Edgewood has two distinct characters: an expansive boulevard section west of Sherman Avenue and a more intimate section as a one-way street through the heart of Dwight. While Edgewood is sometimes used as a shortcut by regional commuters trying to avoid traffic on George Street, the educational institutions flood the avenue with students and parents daily during the school year.

With the leadership of the

City's Department of Transportation, traffic calming has become a new priority for local neighborhoods. Edgewood Avenue is an ideal candidate for a range of innovative traffic calming strategies designed to slow and distribute traffic, provide safe and attractive zones for pedestrians and bicycles, and at the same time expand and enhance the environmental performance of the street with improved landscaping and better water management.

The multiple roles any Main Street must fill inevitably lead to conflicts of interest; however, Dwight residents seem committed to building on the strengths of Edgewood Avenue and resolving any existing tensions.

Vision : An Educational Corridor

With the Troup Magnet School, multiple day care centers, the Timothy Dwight School, and Yale University, Edgewood is poised to become an educational corridor for the neighborhood, if not the city's west side.

Helping the neighborhood meet the needs of its academic communities will almost certainly improve the area for all residents. Increased safety, abundant open space for recreation, a healthful environment for study, a sense of collective identity and responsibility, and a commitment to the future--these are elements of great neighborhoods with or without schools.

However, given the range and number of schools on Edgewood

Avenue, Dwight residents are eager to embrace the vision of a street that reflects the common values of the institutions and their people.

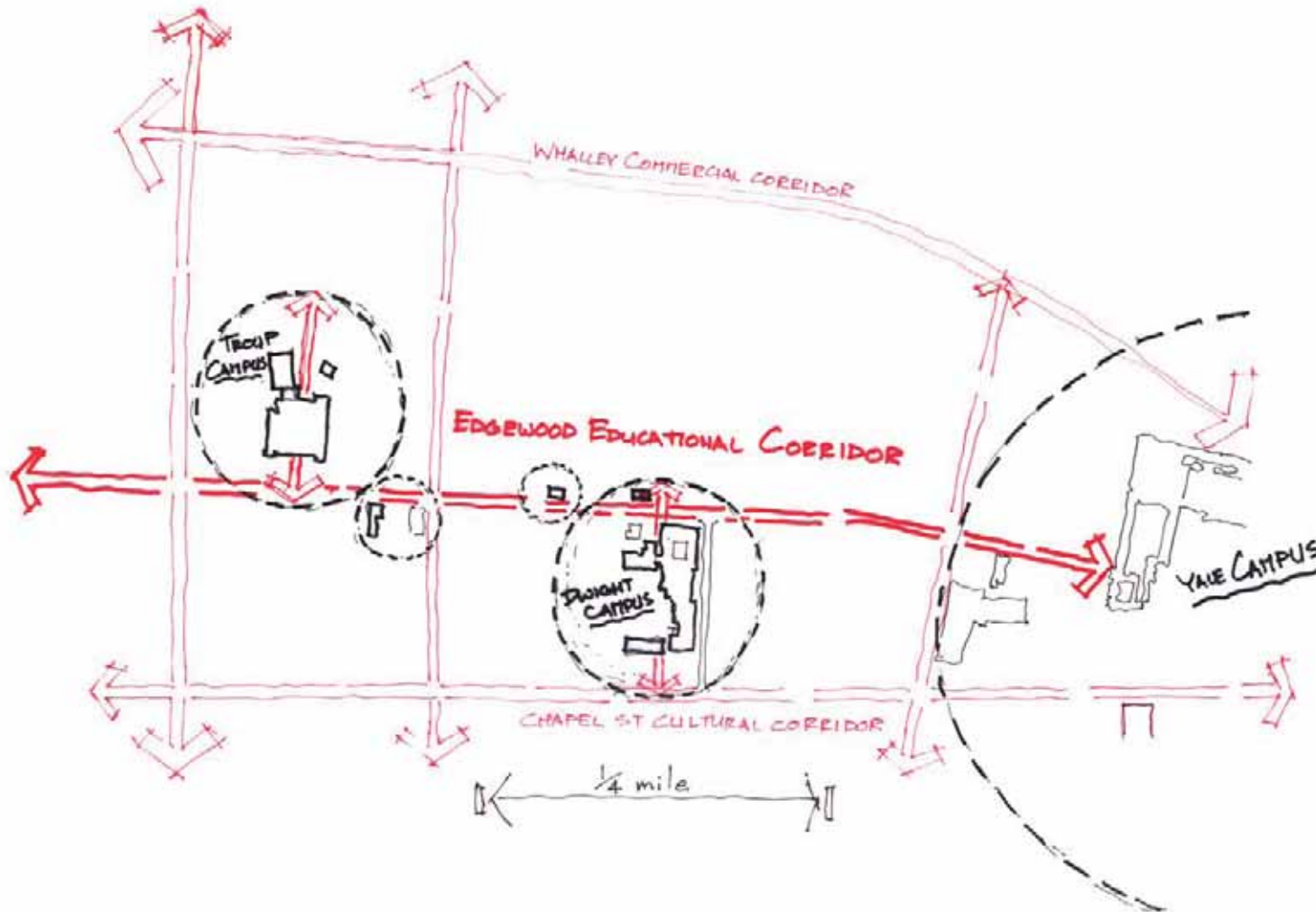
Given recent proposals for changing the role of the Dwight School, careful consideration will need to be given to the future configuration and use of the school buildings and campus. The neighborhood should play a leading role in those plans to ensure that this important site will continue to serve and enhance the community.



Current view of the Dwight School



Proposed view down Edgewood Avenue

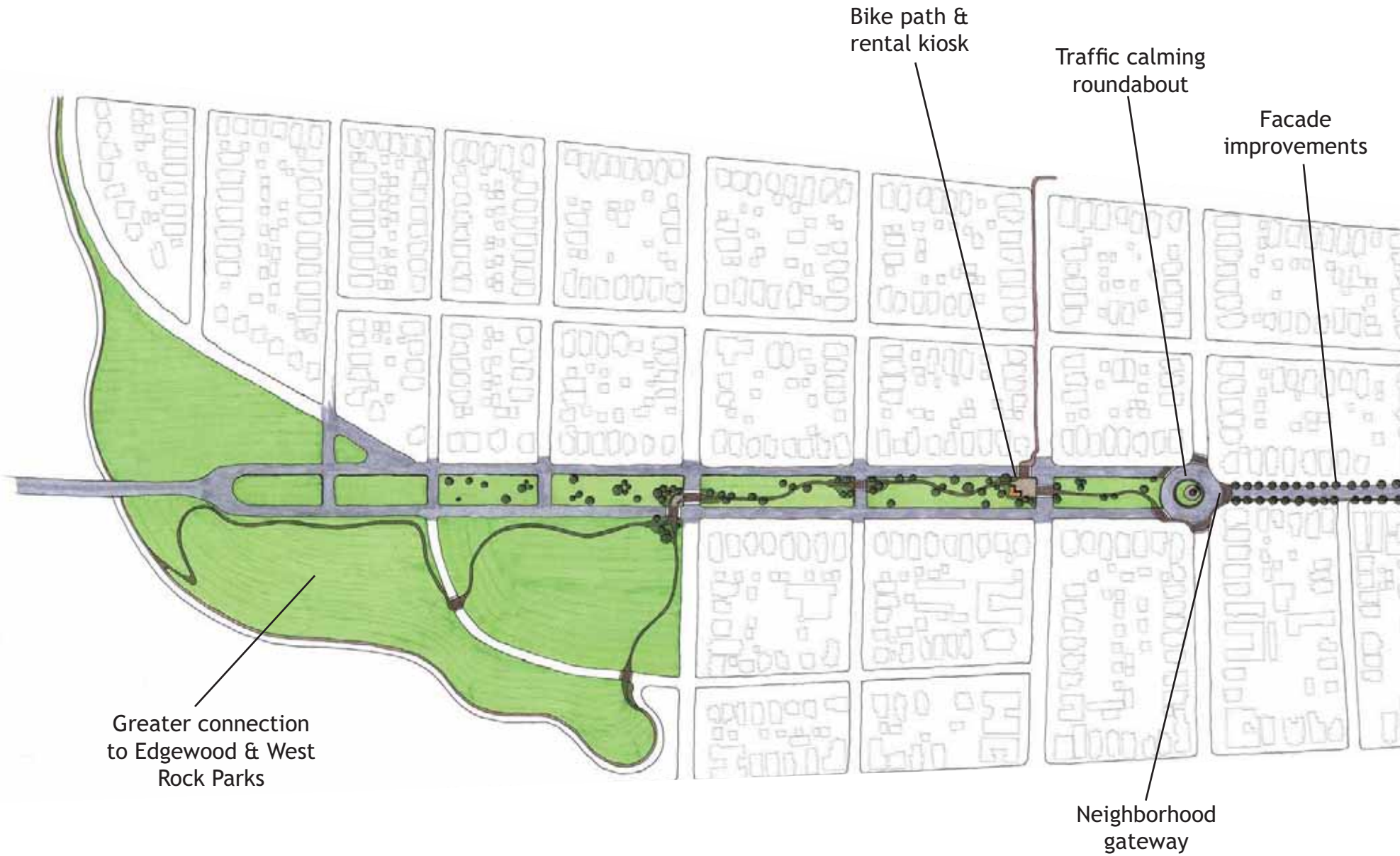


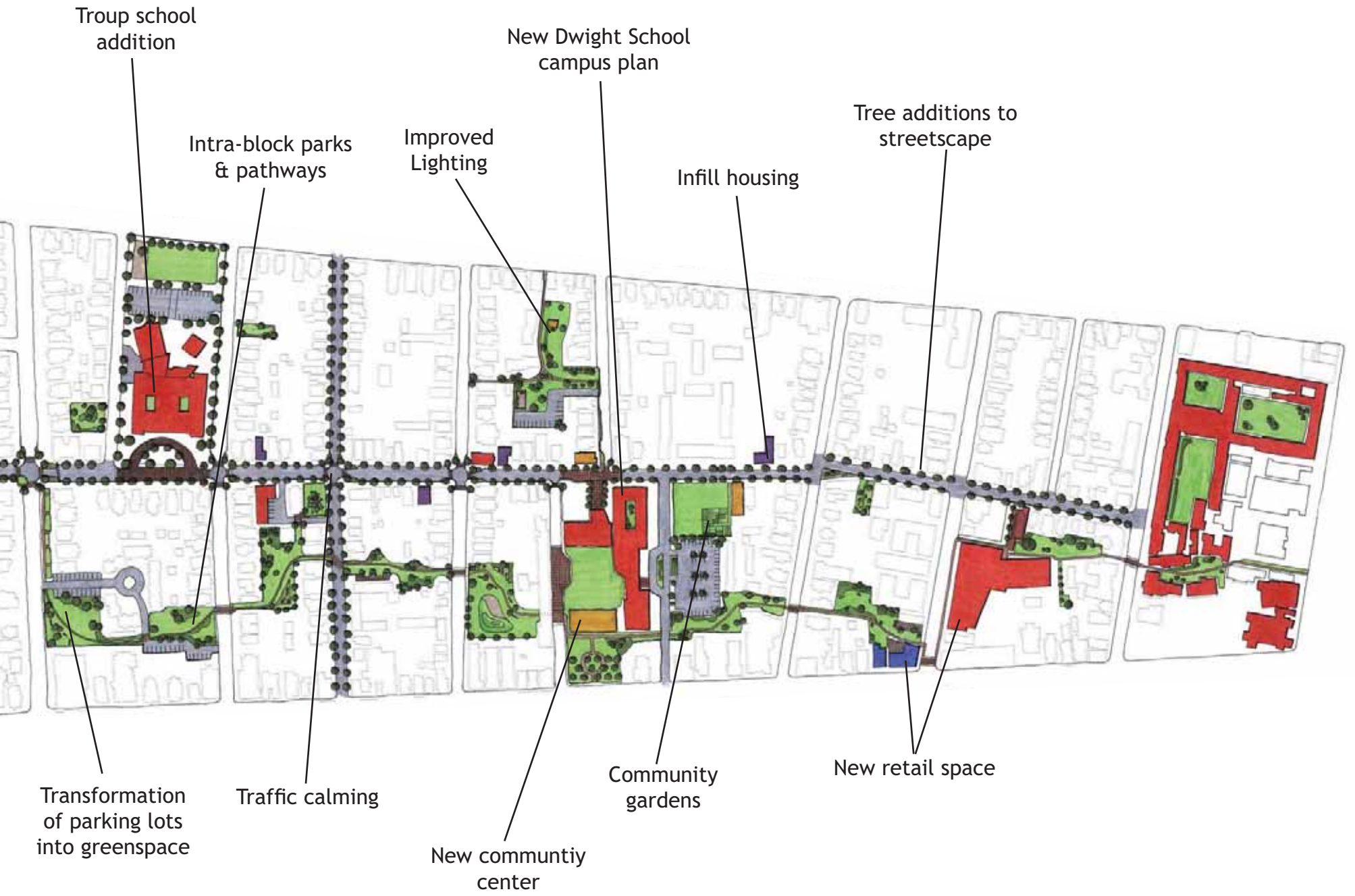
The "Edgewood Educational Corridor"

Goals

- Implement a broad array of traffic calming measures to increase the security of pedestrians and cyclists by aggressively managing traffic on Edgewood at and between key intersections
- Make Edgewood Avenue an inviting space for students and their families by encouraging the upkeep of sidewalks, facades, front yards, median strips, etc.
- Promote a healthful environment for study and play by maintaining existing green space and perhaps creating more
- Encourage a thoughtful redesign and re-use of the Dwight Elementary School and campus to reflect the needs and interests of the whole neighborhood
- Plan efficient, scenic, secure connections to Edgewood Park for pedestrians and bikers alike
- Encourage cycling within and through the neighborhood by creating a continuous network of bike routes that can serve both commuters and recreational riders

Edgewood Corridor Charrette Proposals





Whalley Avenue

Currently : A Busy Street Serving both Dwight and the Region

Right now, Whalley Avenue serves as both a regional transportation and commercial corridor and a local shopping street for Dwight residents to fill most of their everyday needs. Efforts to improve this important street must not only take into account the tension between the competing priorities of vehicular movement and pedestrian walkability, but also the divergent social and economic values of the neighborhood, city, and region.

More specifically, Whalley exhibits a shift in character around Sherman Avenue which must be considered: businesses west of Sherman Avenue tend to be small, locally

owned and operated, while the area east of Sherman is dominated by larger, national chains and their auto-oriented parking lots.

Though many businesses thrive on Whalley, a number of sites, such as the block between Elsworth and Sherman, remain underdeveloped, and should become an area of focus for the coming phase of the neighborhood's development. The model in those areas should turn away from further strip encroachment to street-oriented, mixed use development compatible in scale and character with the historic patterns of development along this important corridor.

Vision : A Greener Mix Serving Both Neighborhood and City

Dwight residents do not want Whalley Avenue to 'turn its back' on the neighborhood, nor do they want the corridor to wither as an economic engine and comprehensive commercial center for Dwight. Future development on the Dwight side of Whalley Avenue should strategically address Elm Street, providing equal physical and economic access to the regional traffic passing Dwight via Whalley and the immediate residential population.

The Shaws grocery store--designed with input from the 1996 charrette--is a model for this kind of development, not only because it provides high quality, affordable

goods to both neighborhood and regional populations, but also because the store is sited to address the residential core of Dwight as well as its commercial edge. Phase II development of the Shaw's site should continue this strategy.

Citizens of Dwight believe Whalley could benefit from more greenery and attractive façade treatments--measures that would make the corridor more inviting, more efficient, and more profitable.



Shaw's Plaza



Vacant lot on the corner of Elm and Orchard Street



Proposed development on the corner of Whalley and Winthrop

Goals

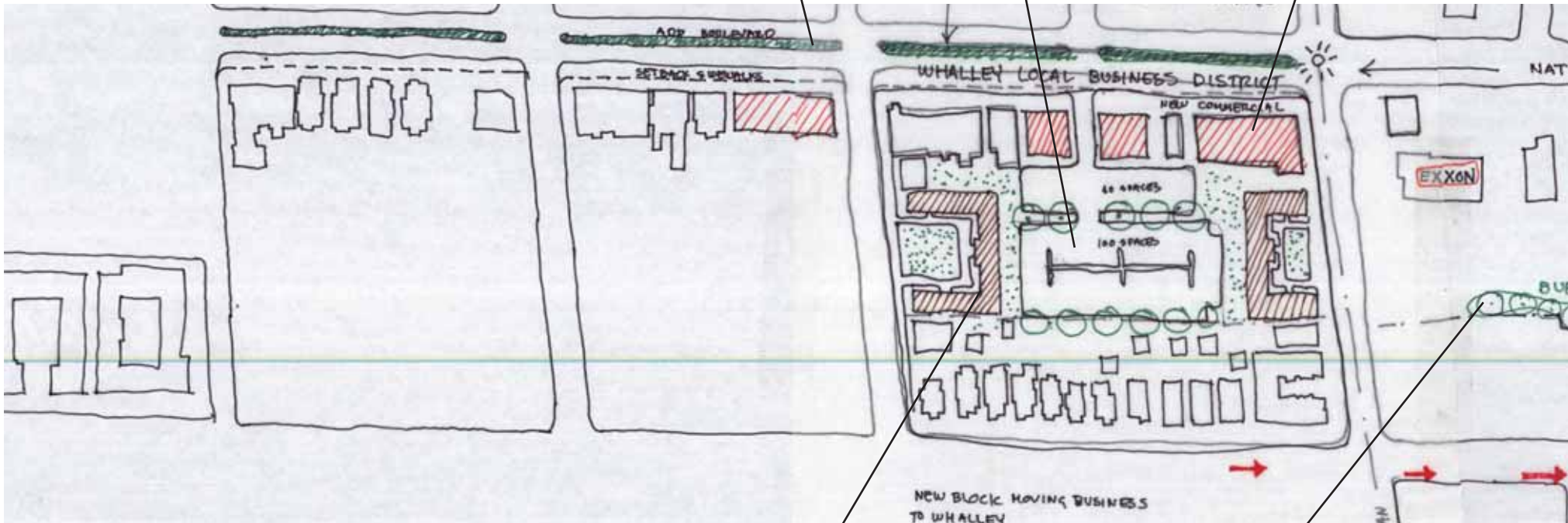
- Encourage new mixed-use development along the corridor, especially in Phase II of the Shaw's/Dwight Plaza site, and on currently underdeveloped sites
- Ensure strong physical and economic connections between Whalley Avenue and Elm Street
- Make Whalley a more inviting avenue for pedestrians and customers by greening the sidewalks and regulating traffic
- Provide financial and operational support for neighborhood entrepreneurs and incentivize neighborhood patronage
- Reclaim green spaces by consolidating parking lots, planting median strips and cleaning up vacant back lots
- Encourage the business community to enter cooperative agreements for land use, property maintenance, and even energy production and consumption
- Invite a broader range of businesses to settle on Whalley, especially those Dwight residents are missing

Whalley Corridor Charrette Proposals

Median strip west of Sherman Avenue to help calm traffic and increase walkability

Consolidated green parking lots

Addition of new commercial buildings to maintain a street facade



New courtyard housing along the sides of the block to mediate between residential and commercial uses

Buffer Zone Bioswale to ease transition between residential and commercial lots and help manage stormwater runoff

Route 34 Connector

Currently : Too Long a Tabula Rasa

Route 34 is one of the most important, undeveloped tracts of land in New Haven, and its future is intimately linked to Dwight as well as the West River and Hill neighborhoods. Development of the site has been highly controversial since the connector's inception as an urban renewal project in the late 1960's when the state acquired the land and cleared a swath of existing neighborhood fabric.

Ideas for redeveloping the corridor have accelerated since 2004 when the City of New Haven regained control of the parcel. Currently, the Route 34 Connector is a wide thoroughfare with six lanes

of high-speed traffic separated by a large tract of land currently being used for parking and undeveloped open space.

The connector serves cars more than it serves people, and it has become a tragically effective barrier to the essential physical, economic, political, and social integration of the communities it touches. Finally, the Route 34 connector is a missed opportunity to create an inviting and ecologically effective open space for people, plants, and animals.

Vision : A Re-Connector

Dwight residents sense it is time to capitalize on the potential of this tabula rasa site, even as they are anxious about how political and economic powers beyond them may shape the outcome. What was meant as a highway connector should be reimagined as a model neighborhood connector.

Any large-scale development of the corridor is an opportunity to not only mend the city-scale divisions between west side neighborhoods, but connect the urban core of New Haven to its natural perimeter, the West River corridor. On a smaller scale, the connector site is an opportunity to engineer a vital mix

of retail, residential, civic, and recreational uses. Creating a economically and ecologically vital neighborhood of moderate to high density along Dwight's southern edge could lead to the development of the north-south connections running from North Frontage through Chapel to Whalley.

Again, the fate of the connector is linked to a large number of competing factors and interest groups, which means a close political collaboration between Dwight and its neighbors will be essential to ensuring that any developments along Route 34 are win-win for all concerned.



Current conditions



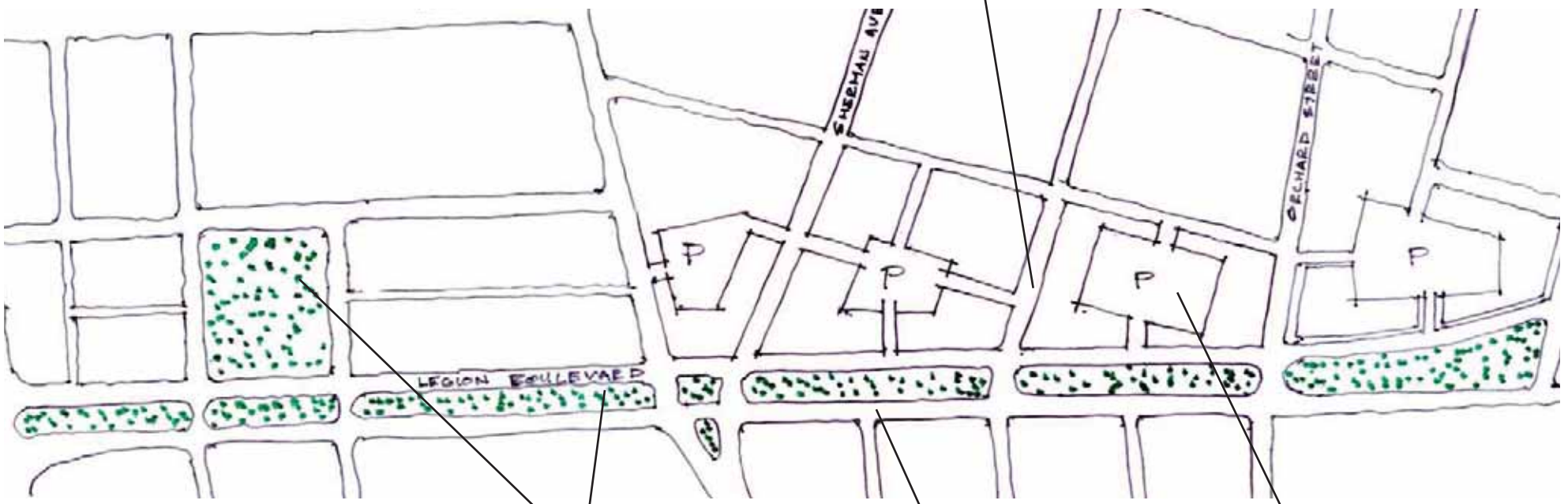
1996 proposal, YUDW



Goals

- Reconstruct the urban fabric between Dwight/West River and the Hill to create a healthy and economically viable neighborhood
- Provide services and employment opportunities complementing and/or supplementing existing developments in Dwight
- Create mixed-use buildings which include retail, entertainment, affordable housing (single and multi-family units), and possibly civic or cultural functions
- Create adequate amounts of safe, clean, open and well-lit green spaces which connect to the West River corridor and promote a more ecologically sustainable community
- Enhance the walkability between neighborhoods through a network of pleasant, safe bike and pedestrian pathways
- Promote development at a scale and density appropriate to the surrounding neighborhoods

Route 34 Corridor Charrette Proposals

Extension of existing streets to integrate and connect Dwight/West River and Hill Neighborhoods



 Open Greenspaces
 Parking

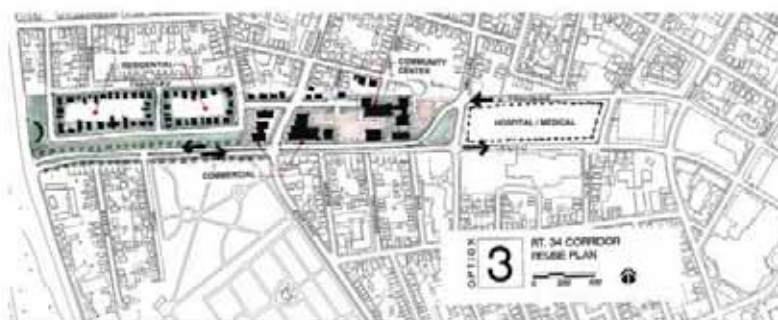
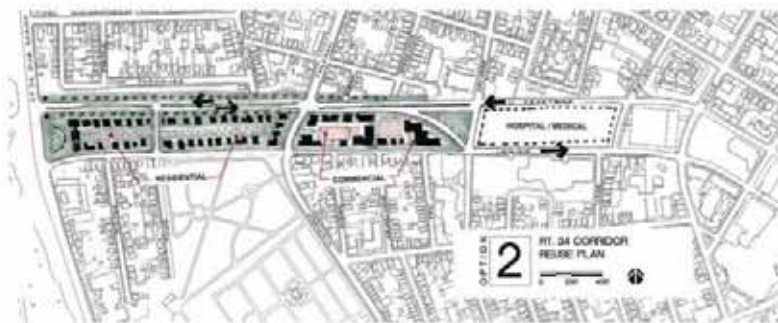
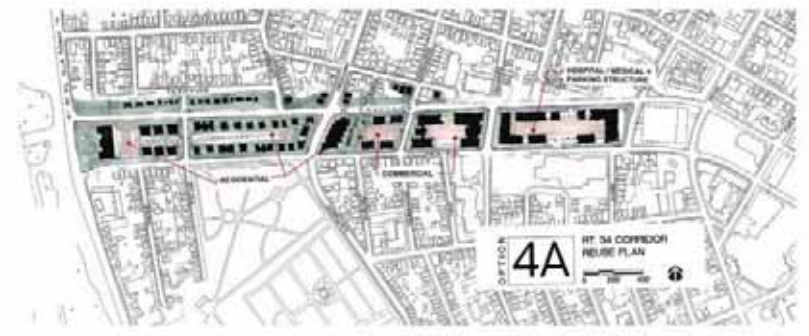
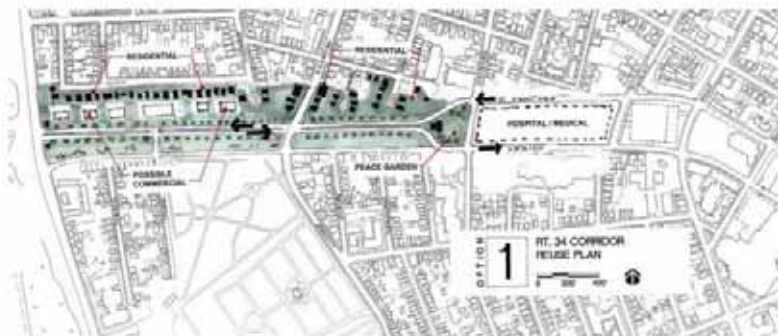
Creation of more neighborhood green spaces

Narrowing of Streets to improve walkability

Bring parking off the street into the center of blocks

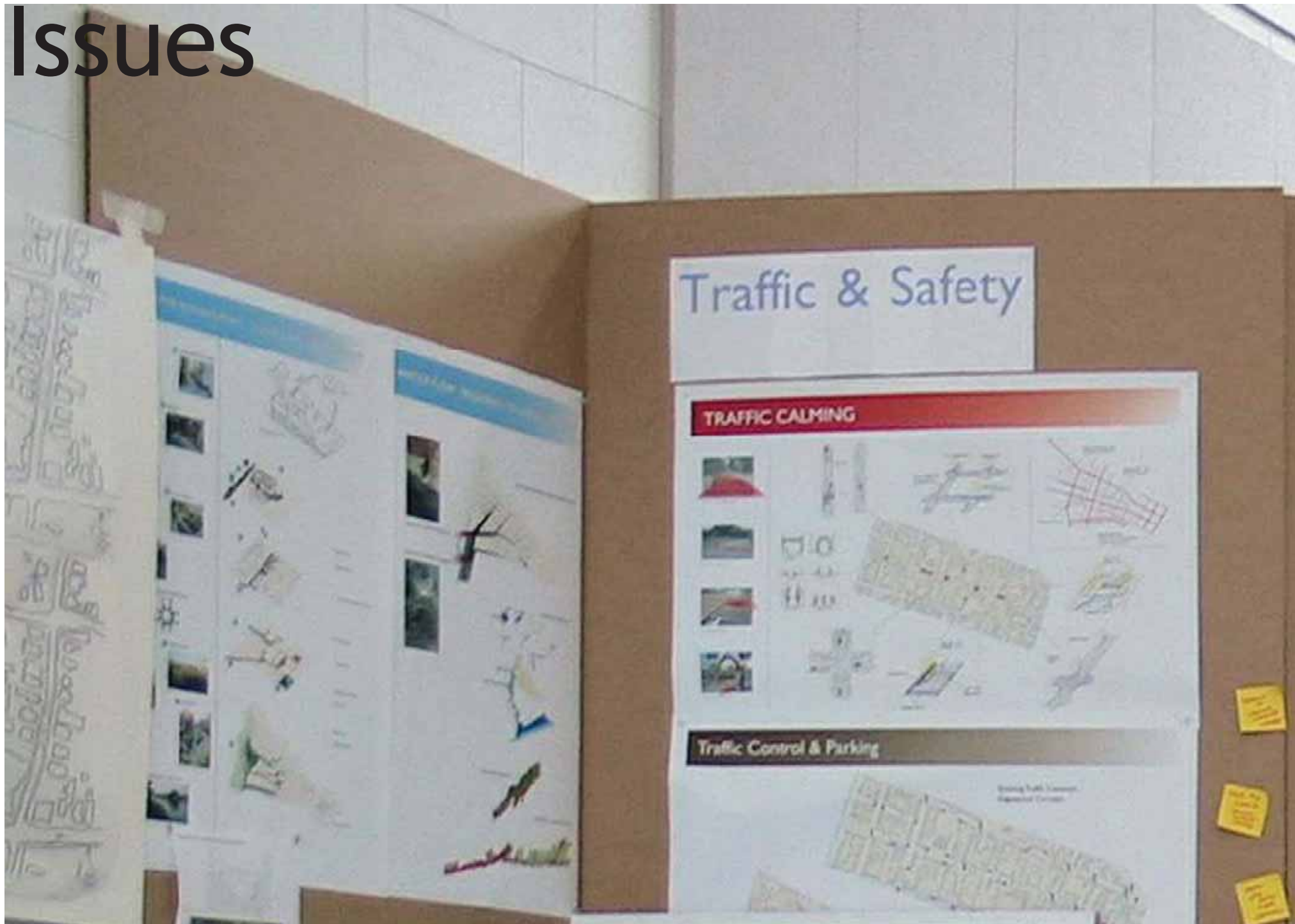


Route 34 Corridor Development Strategy
 RKG Associates, Inc
 2006



Route 34 Re-use Options

Issues



Traffic & Safety

TRAFFIC CALMING

TRAFFIC CALMING

Traffic Control & Parking

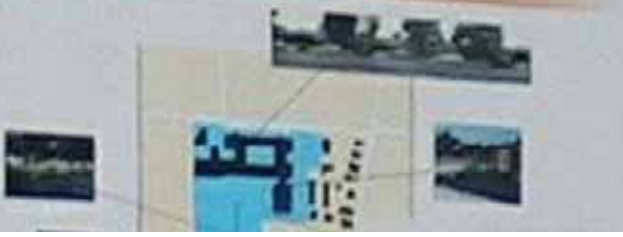
Traffic Control & Parking

Youth & Education

Dwight School Campus History



Dwight School Campus Current Site



Dwight School Campus Current Site

What would you like to see?

★ Post your comments with the provided graphic output ★

A site plan of the Dwight School campus with numerous colorful sticky notes attached to it. The sticky notes are in various colors (yellow, pink, purple, green) and contain handwritten text, representing community feedback. The notes are scattered across the site plan, with a higher concentration on the right side. Some notes are placed over specific buildings or areas of the campus. The site plan itself shows the layout of the school buildings, parking areas, and surrounding streets.

Dwight School Campus Current Site

Sidwell Friends School, Inc. in partnership with the University of California

Cost-Effective and Open Space Design
Seeking LEED Platinum certification

Education, Youth & Community

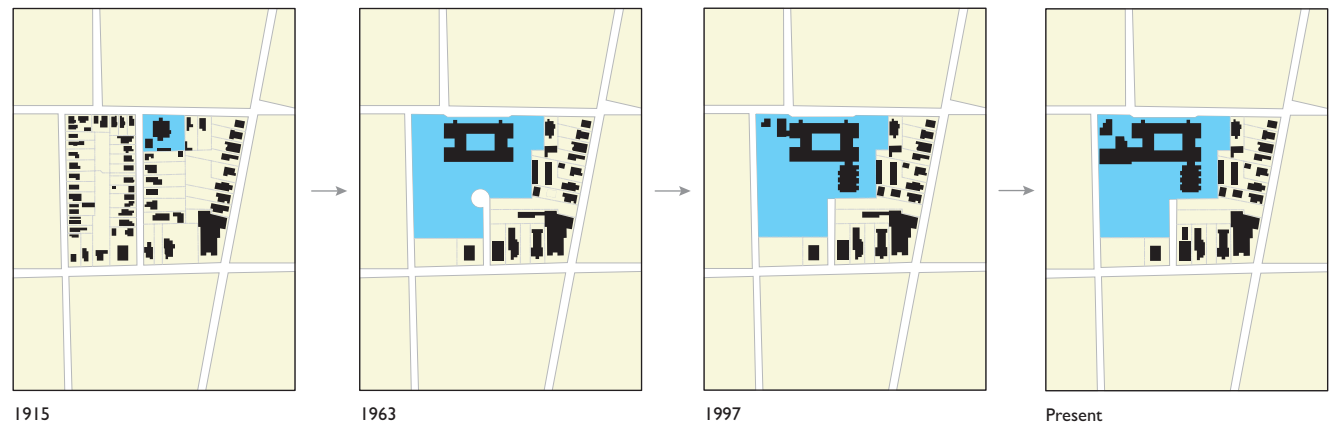
Summary

Dwight residents are eager to establish a zone along Edgewood Avenue that serves the interests of neighborhood youth and builds on the sense of community established by this “main street.” The recent closing of the Dwight School presents an opportunity to develop the entire campus. In the coming years the campus should provide open space, improve the safety of the children, positively influence traffic and parking, and enhance the visual character of the neighborhood.

The neighborhood advocates future uses that provide gathering spaces and educational programs for residents of all ages. Possible reuses include a community center with a neighborhood library, working studios for local artists, and an urban farm, all of which would provide much needed resources to the Dwight community and foster inter-generational interaction among residents. In order to achieve this new-found goal however, it is imperative that Dwight residents work with the

City to determine the future of the site. Plans for the development of the campus will be added to the report as they are produced.

History of the Dwight School Campus



Current Dwight School facade

Strategies

- Enhance the Edgewood “education corridor” by improving the streetscape
- Create more spaces for after school programs
- Develop appropriate methods to handle bus traffic along Edgewood
- Install traffic calming measures at street crossings near neighborhood schools and other nodes of local activity
- Increase the community usage of the Dwight School field and playgrounds
- Create a community website where Dwight residents can obtain information about after school and summer programs
- Create a community center which will bring together all Dwight residents
- Develop sustainable open space uses and management plans for the Dwight School campus



Community Center Precedents



Proposals for the vacant lot on Edgewood Avenue and Garden Street

Adaptive reuse of the Timothy Dwight School campus is an important issue in the Dwight community and a crucial project for the neighborhood's vitality. Dwight residents have expressed their desire to redevelop the school into a community center with services for youth and senior citizens and space for community activities.

Possible reprogramming of the school building and grounds include:
(options are not necessarily mutually exclusive)

- Community gathering spaces, multi-purpose rooms, DCMT offices, and an expanded community kitchen
- Classes in art / cooking / family / language
- After-school programs / summer camp
- 1-acre community farm with associated cooking facilities, classes, and community programming
case study: <http://www.added-value.org/index.php>
<http://www.seasonalchef.com/farmredhook.htm>
- Small café with outdoor seating situated near farm, partly supplied by community farm
- Library branch, possibly in southeast school addition, with homeowners' corner and tutoring program
- Community fitness center and health resource center
- Athletic fields with community youth athletic leagues
- Community arts center with some classrooms converted to live-work studios offering art instruction for youth and adults
- Water playpark feature on campus
case study: <http://www.discoverygreen.com/recreation>
- Green roof community center with possible roof-top playground and step-down access to street/field-level
case study: http://www.aiany.org/NHNY/ViaVerde_Panel1.pdf
http://www.aiany.org/NHNY/ViaVerde_Panel2.pdf
- Expansion of Montessori School programming





Open Space & Sustainability

Summary

Dwight residents are increasingly concerned about the health of the community, as well as rising energy costs, and the loss of neighborhood open space. The goal is to give future improvements a “green dimension” that helps make Dwight a more beautiful, less wasteful, and healthier community.

Suggestions include planting parking lots, patios, and median strips with native species that are pleasing to the eye and require little or no maintenance. Also, Dwight should make the most of its existing green spaces—pocket parks, front yards, trails, playgrounds—maintaining them as lively spaces for human activity as well as the local ecosystem. One suggestion was to include an educational garden in the new Dwight School campus, possibly working with the Yale Sustainable Food Project, and involving youth and seniors to tend the space in the summer.

One of the most exciting ways to create a greener Dwight is through so-called “micro-associations”: a few

residents who pool modest resources to create substantial benefits for everyone. This could mean several small business owners buying a solar array to save on energy, or sharing a parking lot to create more green space and attract customers. Or it could be as simple as tearing down a fence to create a communal yard.

As already mentioned, traffic calming strategies could also include enhanced landscaping and open space corridors, that also do a better and more sustainable job of managing water run-off and drainage at the local level.



Bioswales used to capture and maintain runoff water

Strategies

- Convert existing parking lots into “green” parking lots with plantings
- Integrate streetscape improvements such as median strips with native plants into traffic calming techniques that also manage storm water
- Work with surrounding neighborhoods to develop strategies for storm and waste water management on a regional scale
- Connect current greenspaces with a network of green bike paths, midblock parks, pocket parks and playgrounds
- Create micro-associations to help local business and home owners reduce their energy usage and costs
- Encourage more walking and biking by creating a safe atmosphere for bikers and pedestrians



Proposed neighborhood greenway system



Dwight School field

Traffic & Safety

Summary

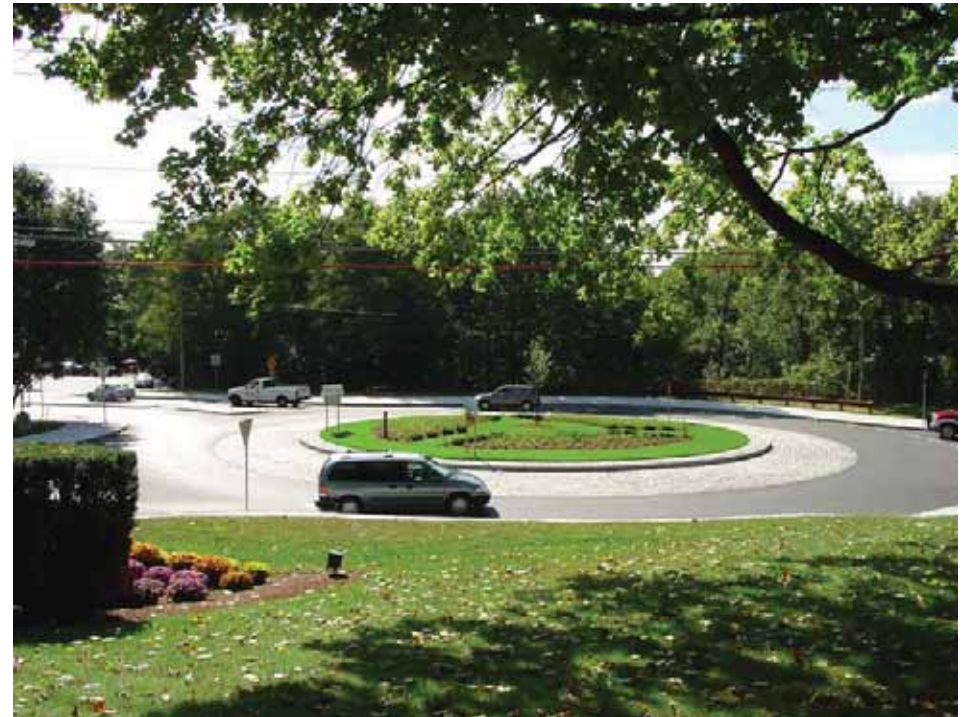
Dwight residents want to make neighborhood streets safe, pedestrian friendly, accessible, beautiful places. If bicycles, cars and pedestrians are not managed intelligently, navigating the neighborhood will become unsafe for everyone, whether they are driving, biking or walking. There is near unanimous concern about the problem of cars speeding down Edgewood Avenue, especially given the number of schools, filling the streets with a dangerous mix of buses, young pedestrians, commuter thru-traffic, and idling cars twice daily while school is in session.

Another frequent request was for safe, clearly marked bike paths. Neighborhood paths can and should link up to the existing network of regional bike lanes and trails through the parks. Ideally, the paths would be suited for both recreational bikers and commuters.

Several residents complained about an overabundance of parking along Whalley Avenue as well as the Route 34 corridor. Empty parking

lots not only become uncomfortable, inefficient 'heat islands' in the summer, but they can be unsightly even when well maintained. Residents would like to see 'more green' and less concrete to increase the pleasantness and health of the neighborhood.

Several parking garages dominate the Dwight landscape around St. Rafael's, at Sherman and Howe, behind Yale's new Sculpture Building, and so on. While the Yale garage includes retail frontage, most Dwight residents agree that the garages are generally 'bad neighbors'--unsightly structures that not only multiply the problems associated with cars (pollution, noise, congestion, accidents, etc.), but also create 'dead zones' where walking becomes unpleasant. When there are fewer pedestrians and no retail or residential presence, security becomes an issue and parking lots and garages attract loiterers.



Roundabout in Nashua, New Hampshire

Strategies

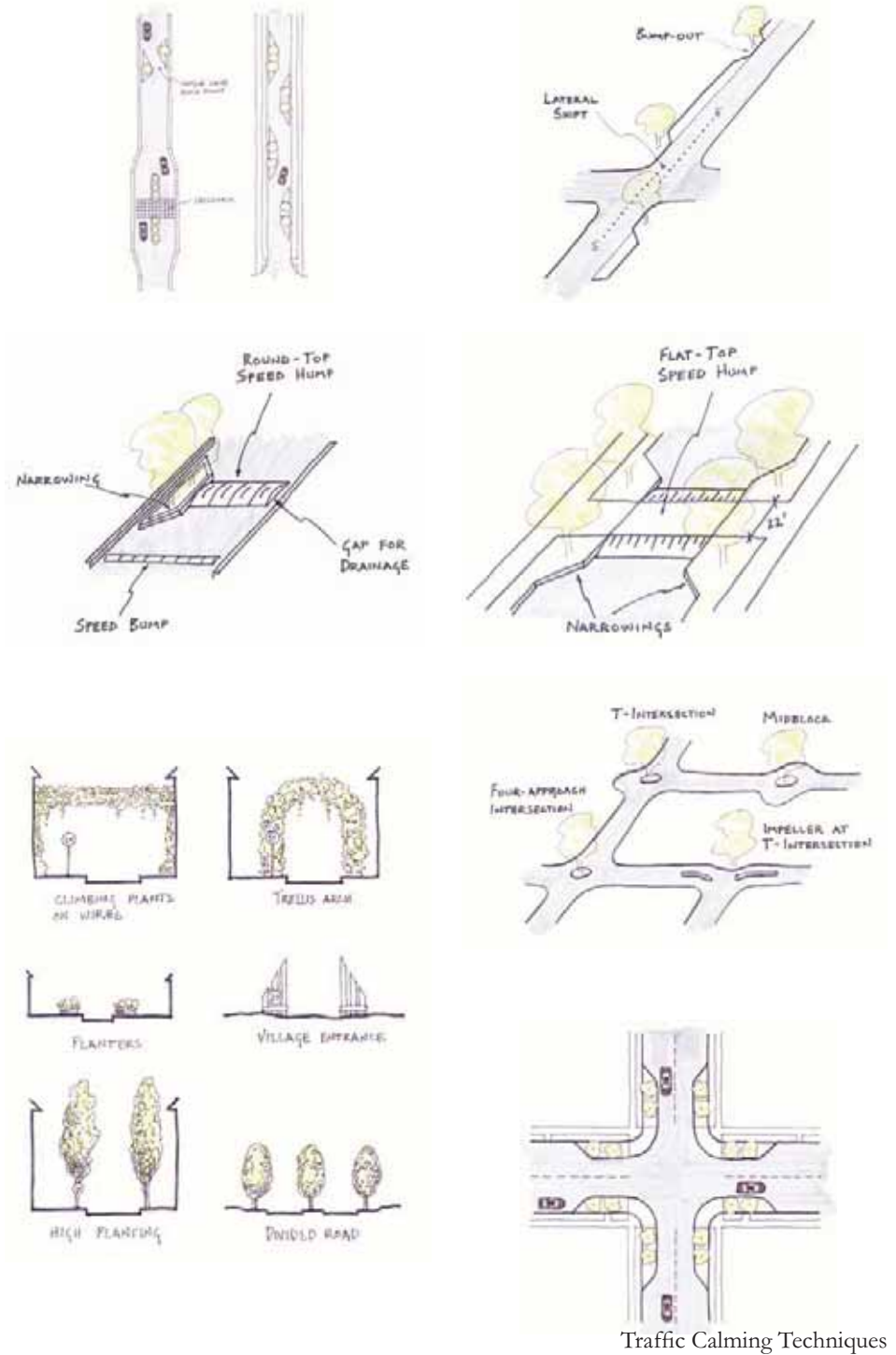
- Slow down the traffic on Edgewood Avenue especially during school hours
- Create bike paths to better manage street traffic and improve safety and use of non-vehicular local transportation options
- Use traffic calming techniques such as speed bumps, traffic tables, four way stop signs, roundabouts, bump-outs etc... to slow down traffic and increase pedestrian safety
- Use different patterns and materials to distinguish crosswalks and enhance sidewalks
- Develop a comprehensive streetscape palette, that integrates safety, environmental and aesthetic considerations



Crosswalk paving



Bump out on Chapel Street



Traffic Calming Techniques

Housing & Economic Development

Summary

Dwight aims to build on past programs and projects to ensure that neighborhood residents have ready access to education, training and employment. This means focusing on a sustainable mix of national retail chains and local businesses, all providing a robust variety of goods and services for the community. Development might build off the current success of areas like Chapel West, the Broadway District, and West River Center.

Dwight should also work with partners in other neighborhoods to insure that any new development along the Route 34 connector serves the best interests of residents. Some concerns include restoring connections between neighborhoods; balancing traffic, parking, pollution and pedestrian safety; and promoting “smart growth” strategies that will keep the community physically and economically healthy for years to come.

Finally, many residents expressed concern over the decline

of responsible, responsive property management in the neighborhood. Dwight should work with public and private agencies to diagnose and treat the root causes of nuisance in the neighborhood (e.g., absentee landlords) as soon as possible. Also, the GDDC and other responsible local non-profit developers should continue to provide a model for the redevelopment of the neighborhood’s historic housing stock, and its sustainable and careful management.



Preserved historic home in Dwight

Strategies

- Provide funds and guidance for home renovations and improvements
- Create a community website which can provide materials for homeowners on home improvements and energy conservation
- Encourage home ownership and live-in landlords
- Create a streetscape that will enhance local homes
- Preserve and restore any deteriorating historic homes, maintaining the continuity of the neighborhood fabric
- Enhance economic anchors such as the Dwight Plaza and those along the Whalley Corridor
- Link centers of local development such as Broadway, Chapel West, Downtown New Haven and the West River Center at Derby and Norton
- Support sustainable development such as shared parking and other smart growth practices
- Collaborate with West River and the City to ensure developments on Route 34 will benefit the neighborhood by linking areas cut off by original planning, balance traffic and parking, employ sustainable design strategies and minimize pollution, and provide jobs and economic opportunities for local residents



Development option for the Shaw's Plaza



Vacated home on Kensington Street



Historical home on Howe Street

Neighborhood Character

Summary

Community members want to enhance and publicize the neighborhood through a coordinated program of property improvement and maintenance, streetscape beautification, and public art. One suggested way to give the neighborhood more of a presence--especially to through-traffic--was to provide “gateways” at key points throughout Dwight. This could mean landscaping, a mural, street lamps, sculpture, signs, or any number of measures.

Dwight should also work to preserve and promote the rich physical history of the neighborhood. With a program of facade improvement and restoration, Dwight will become more beautiful, and will command more respect from residents and visitors. The community could also reach out and provide information and education about its historic houses, churches, and streetscapes. One way to do this would be through a neighborhood web site, which could not only provide visitor information, but a place for Dwight residents to

get contacts and learn about local news and events.

One of the simplest ways to improve any neighborhood is to expound upon its historical importance and use it to create a sense of identity for all of its constituents. The Dwight neighborhood, with its rich stock of historical housing, has so much potential to be a great historical district.

The challenge for Dwight is to ensure that its renting population, which at the moment is the majority, will embrace the neighborhood enough to care for and adopt the art pieces installed to highlight certain locations or enhance the character of the neighborhood. Some of the easiest ways to get around these sorts of issues are to proceed with pieces that do not require the maintenance of the neighborhood.



Current view down Edgewood Avenue



Proposed view down Edgewood Avenue

Strategies

- Focus on the main corridors of the neighborhood and try to give each a unique character
- Define neighborhood gateway areas
- Create standards for street lighting and furniture
- Repair and maintain sidewalks
- Install planters and trees lining the roads
- Create standards for new installations
- Highlight neighborhood history and architecture through signage, public art, information or special events
- Help residents improve and maintain the appearance of their homes



Proposed art installation in front of the Dwight School



Decorative street lighting



Neighborhood archway on Edgewood and Winthrop

Conclusion

Integrated Design

As we talked through the many concerns and ideas that came out of the charrette, it was exciting to see how many of the potential solutions overlapped in their effects, multiplying the value of even the smallest neighborhood improvement. For example, a ‘gateway arch’ at Edgewood and Sherman Avenues could not only contribute to the spatial and cultural identity of Dwight, but it could be combined with curb ‘bump outs’ that force cars to slow down, making the street safer.

Likewise, street lamps combined with smart landscaping might simultaneously increase safety, enhance the historic character of Dwight, and make it more attractive for customers of local merchants. The new Dwight School campus can and should integrate ideas ranging from traffic management and neighborhood character, to open space, housing and educational programs for youth and seniors.

One particularly useful stretch of common ground that emerged from the conversation was the area of environmentally sensi-

tive design. Because of the interconnectedness of ecosystems (which indirectly link such diverse factors as the food residents eat, insect populations, the color of roofs, rainwater quality and types of vegetation), decisions made in design are multiplied throughout the environment. Many ecological concepts not only improve on the aesthetic or natural health of Dwight, but also provide benefits for security, youth and transportation.

For example, adding bicycle paths for commuters and locals not only reduces noise and air pollution, but could lead to more ‘eyes on the street,’ making the neighborhood safer for everyone. Also, well-planned bicycle lanes calm traffic at key points, often through the creative use of plantings. If well-planned and executed, a bike-friendly neighborhood can also reap economic benefits as residents are encouraged to look closer to home for goods and services and commuters who might pass through Dwight experience the neighborhood more intimately and might be more likely to stop on their way to and from work.

Even well-established neighborhood solutions with solid precedents—like creating bike paths—are full of pitfalls. To extend the example above, Dwight residents raised real questions about how bike paths might negatively impact the neighborhood through loitering, bikes on sidewalks, less green space, loss of street parking, loss of right of way, and so on. Or even the simple fact that bike paths need to be maintained and something as simple as snow removal can become a problem for creative designs that succeed in every other way.

This is not to say that residents, on balance, are against bike paths in Dwight, but only to highlight the manifold nature of the problems and solutions. We want to emphasize that the larger lessons of this charrette are less about creativity and efficiency—both of which are central to the best, integrated designs—but communication. The task before us was to come together as a community and continue a conversation that has been so productive over the last decade.

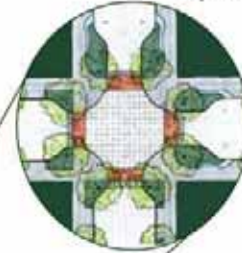
Future conversations of this sort should be as open and inclusive as possible, and Dwight would do well to continue inviting design professionals, city officials, Dwight residents, residents of other west side neighborhoods, and institutional leaders to the table. This is especially critical when it comes to issues of environmental sustainability and economic development, which easily transcend the political and physical boundaries of Dwight. This kind of decision-making is not easy. It can be politically intensive, time consuming, and cumbersome; however, Dwight has proved itself a mature, well-organized, savvy neighborhood that is more than capable of effecting smart changes that have set the community on a positive course over the past ten years. Having accomplished so much with a range of projects both large and small, it is exciting to imagine how Dwight will grow over the next ten years.

Proposed roundabout at the corner of Winthrop and Edgewood



Dwight Neighborhood Plan

Neighborhood bioswales to help capture water runoff



Interior greenways with walking paths



Proposed view down Edgewood Avenue with planters and trees

**Some important action items
for continued and future efforts
include:**

- Quickly define a set of futures for the Dwight School Campus. Convene neighborhood working groups and relevant city agencies and officials to examine the future use and configuration of the space. Begin to assemble the political, social, and economic capital necessary to help negotiate the best outcome for Dwight
- Improve streetscape along the ‘great neighborhood street’ corridors with improved lighting and signage, enhanced landscaping, façade restoration, and ongoing sidewalk maintenance in cooperation with the City
- Work with adjacent communities and the City to plan the future of the two critical regional corridors bounding the Dwight neighborhood: Whalley Avenue and the Route 34 Connector with an emphasis on “smart growth” strategies
- Work with the relevant City agencies to design and install traffic calming measures on neighborhood streets—especially Edgewood Avenue—including traffic tables, landscaped bump-outs, digital radar speed signs, new traffic patterns and stronger police presence
- Create specific social and economic incentives to encourage residents to beautify homes, vacant lots, sidewalks, and green spaces
- Establish a “Green” taskforce for Dwight. The group should begin building a network of resources and contacts to help make Dwight cleaner, healthier, and more efficient. After forging a number of key partnerships with City and State agencies as well as private environmental organizations, the group should seek grant monies to implement specific, high-priority projects
- Contact City Seed, the Yale Sustainable Food Project, and other regional groups to explore possibilities for neighborhood food production and distribution
- Work with urban designers, relevant city agencies (transportation, parks, sanitation, and so on), as well as cycling advocacy groups to design a safe, pleasant network of bike paths within and through Dwight, beginning with the pairing of Elm Street (westbound) and Edgewood Avenue (eastbound) as a backbone for future branches
- Create a neighborhood website to give Dwight residents access to information about neighborhood news and events, government funds, educational programs, home improvements suggestions, etc.
- Host regular events such as block parties and historic tours to support neighborliness and build a sense of community

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