



A
Land Use Vision
for the
Hunts Point Peninsula,
The Bronx, New York City
Short Study, August 2003

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1. Introduction

1.1 Preface

Why Hunts Point?

Starting my summer internship with the Department of City Planning in “The Bronx” on June 9th 2003 I was asked to work on a running Hunts Point Project, the development of a new City’s Strategy for the peninsula through a Task Force made up by different City agencies and local groups.

After my first tour through the area I could get an idea of the diversity of different uses, the huge amount of existing land use related problems and a number of specialties that make this area quite interesting. You find here the Country’s biggest food distribution center that manages about 80% of the City’s produce and 40% of the City’s meat. The fish market which is currently located in downtown Manhattan is expected to relocate here within the next two years, with building construction underway. Among other uses are a nice redeveloped residential area, a huge Prison Barge with approximately 800 prisoners, one of the biggest collection of auto wreckers and used auto part sellers in the City, a monastery, a prison for the youth, a sewage plant, a large building that formerly housed the American Banknote company, at least nine private waste transfer stations and a recently closed marine waste transfer station. Other things to mention are the long waterfront and some stories about how salsa dance and hip-hop originated right here as well as in other parts of the South Bronx.

I wrote this report during the time when basic fieldwork was still ongoing and before a first general Task Force meeting scheduled for October 1st where the participating agencies and groups would be supposed to present preliminary recommendations. First, I did it to take my time to concentrate on conceptual ideas for this interesting area, second to provide some material to better explain these ideas to others, as they were coming from a more “European” understanding of City Planning, and third also to reflect their value in the context of the American society. Chapter 3 “Conception” was finished soon on August 10th and discussed internally within the involved agencies that are responsible for Land Use Planning, the Department of City Planning and the New York City Economic Development Corporation.

This report must be compact due to the need to be completed during my summer internship from June 9th to September 5th 2003. I am trying to show, how I see this area and how I think about this area by taking advantage of the fact that as a stranger I can get away from common thinking constraints. As no final recommendations are ready at this juncture, it has to be said that this study does not represent the official standpoint of the Department of City Planning or the Task Force, although some recommendations might actually be the same.

I had a good time with the Department of City Planning and am very thankful for the staff for giving me their insights in the structure and ongoing issues in the City, focusing on the Hunts Point Peninsula. I hope, their efforts to improve land use and urban design here will be successful.

Dirk Faulenbach - New York, August 30th 2003 - Dirk.Faulenbach@gmx.de

1.2 Study Issue

Why another study?

A number of studies have been undertaken so far or are on their way that deal with manifold problems the Hunts Point Peninsula in the South Bronx is suffering from. Not yet are these problems solved or is a coherent future vision for the area drawn.

For my understanding, a main problem appears to be the missing leadership for an necessary integrative and interdisciplinary thought development of the area. At the same time, some of the institutions responsible for their sectoral planning as well as the local people that organized themselves within non governmental organizations (NGOs) and within the Community board that is involved in creating the land use policies seem to be very strong. This seems to lead involved people into a quiet agreement in even accepting obviously suboptimal mixes of land use. Examples in the Peninsula are a proposed public park and a waterfront greenway far away from residential or public uses and within areas that are zoned and used for unlimited industrial use for good reasons. Plus, to relocate the fish market out of downtown Manhattan next to a existing sewage treatment Facility on Hunts Point is at least not really appealing.

Despite this the new initiative of City Hall, the Bronx Borough's President and the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation (BOEDC) to develop "The City's Strategy" through a process with special Task force meetings does show the right direction. However, at the time of writing (August 2003) work within that Task Force is naturally still focused on doing detailed analysis.

The aim of this short study is to focus on a integrated view of the problems mainly by making use of already collected data as well as integrating some already created proposals from former studies and to show a holistic solution for future development. It is focused on land use and urban design issues. Because it had to be compact, its main idea is to give a input in the ongoing discussion about how to develop Hunts Point and provide guidelines and overarching goals to discuss. Some standard analytic chapters and a discussion of alternative land use variances also had to be left out due to time constraints.

In many places in the United States, city planning seems to have limited will or power to do a more massive intervention in the existing land use or urban design of an area. It is my understanding that this is in order not to restrict the rights of private property as well as to provide and guarantee a defined and stable building law for the future and to ensure potential developers that there will not be unexpected government restrictions. Despite this, an area like the Hunts Point Peninsula shows what this kind of "less-control" policy can lead to. It is unlikely that its structural problems can be solved without more strict interventions in the future development. To provide a good local environment for future development, the New York City Government should take responsibility to provide a suitable framework for that development and accept the need for some necessarily strict interventions to do so. Legal issues like takings have to be considered according to case law.

The urban design key projects of Chapter 3 are often itself multidisciplinary ones and have to be seen as part of one logical idea for the area. For example, the idea for the further development of the residential area towards the Bronx River also consists of the idea to stop Truck Transit through Edgewater Road here. That depends on the development of the alternative Truck Route through Leggett Avenue. Or, the suggestion for planting trees on part of Randall Avenue has to be seen in one context with the proposed reconstruction of the road in order to get restrictions for truck transit, and both measures also work to functionally separate the residential area from the industrial area.

1.3 Building- and Business Regulations

Zoning

Zoning is the procedure to create general and detailed Land Use Regulations in New York and covers the entire City. New York's Zoning Resolution separates a number of distinguished districts for different mixes of uses. In Hunts Point we find M1, M2, M3 and R6, as shown on the Land Use map at the end of chapter 2. To be permitted, a use has to be in the list of uses that are allowed in that specific zone and in the case of an industrial use, it also has to fulfill the performance standard applying in that Zone.

M1 districts are often industrial front yards or buffers to adjacent residential or commercial districts, they are typically for light industries (e.g. knitting mills, printing plants and wholesale service facilities) but also for all other industries if they manage to meet the strict performance standards required in the Zoning Resolution. Retail and offices are also permitted, as are certain community facilities by special permit, such as hospitals, non-profit institutions without sleeping accommodations, health centers or welfare centers and Houses of worship. Residential development is generally not allowed.

M2 districts have lower performance standards than the M1 districts, more noise and vibration is allowed with the exception when an area borders a residential district. Smoke is permitted; industrial activities need not be entirely enclosed.

M3 districts are for heavy industries - generating noise, traffic, pollutants (e.g. chemical and power plants and foundries), usually located near the waterfront and buffered from residential areas.

R6 districts are for medium density housing districts. Buildings are typically between three and twelve stories in height. The possible higher FAR values (regulates building density) are only allowed for new buildings that provide more open space.

Commercial overlays, C1 and C2 are mapped in the Residential R6 Zone along the northern part of Hunts Point Avenue. These districts permit a wide range of retail stores and service establishments for local and regional shopping.

Special Business Zones

To foster, guide and facilitate economic development, the Hunts Point Peninsula has been made a part of the "New York State Economic Development Zone" and the "Federal Empowerment Zone". A number of incentives like tax breaks, loan programs and energy discounts are available.

To foster area improvements, it has also been designated as an “In-Place Industrial Park” by the New York City Public Development Corporation in 1980.

1.4 Existing and Ongoing Studies for the Area

During the last three decades, starting in 1974, a great number of studies have been undertaken and plans adapted to address the numerous problems on the peninsula. The following selection provides an overview about the work that already has been done. It contains at least all of those reports that take a multidisciplinary view on the area or on parts of the peninsula. Some of the recommended measures have been implemented; some have not, for political reasons or because of insufficient funding. Within this short study there is, however, not enough time and place to discuss all the findings and proposals that have been made. Some of them, however, are being reflected later on in the related chapters.

Strengthening Hunts Point, June 1974

“Strengthening Hunts Point” is a report dealing with the residential portion of the peninsula. The study was undertaken by the “South Bronx Community Planning Unit” which had been established by the Department of City Planning as an experiment in decentralized planning in cooperation with Community Boards. It contains a broad analysis, focused on zoning, and makes suggestions for housing rehabilitation, new housing, rezoning, traffic circulation, and transportation improvements.

The Hunts Point Peninsula - Planning Recommendations 1989

This study consisted of a broad analysis of the residential and the industrial area, excluding the Food Distribution Center, and a number of recommendations in different fields. It was undertaken in coordination with an earlier Hunts Point Task Force, established in 1987 by the Bronx Borough President. It makes proposals for additional housing developments, designation of a park, buffering zones and proposals of how to deal with the appearance of the dominating auto-related businesses.

Plan for the Bronx Waterfront - New York City comprehensive Waterfront Plan, 1993

This plan presents a long term vision and some practical strategies to guide the land use of the Bronx Waterfront besides naming proposals for a number of single projects. Among the broad goals listed are: giving waterfront access to the communities, restoration of natural habitats, and appropriate residential and industrial development.

The plan, which has been developed through a process of intensive public participation, also includes proposals for related zoning amendments that were subsequently approved.

Hunts Point Food Distribution Center (HPFDC) Master Plan - phase one: Inventory and Analysis, 1996; Hunts Point Food Distribution Center Master Plan, 1997

These reports, concentrating on the HPFDC, contain a broad analysis of the existing conditions as well as diverse proposals related to solving existing problems in the market and to foster its future development. The study is to a large extent dealing with Transportation issues that affect the whole peninsula. The given statements related to Rail, Streets, and barge freight provide important information to take into account for the development of the whole peninsula. Recommendations are made for short, mid and long term improvements.

Hunts Point Action Plan, 1996

The Hunts Point Action Plan is quite compact and covers only some pages, but it gives very accurate descriptions of the peninsulas' distinguished areas, including problems, opportunities, policies that have been realized and policies to continue certain necessary improvements. It proposes actions for developing the Food Distribution Center and for the fields of public security, traffic, code enforcement, health and environment.

Waste Facilities in Hunts Point, January 2000

This is a map, created by the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance, that shows the locations of waste facilities based on information obtained through a field survey and from the official NYC1998 Basemap.

New York City Manufacturing Land Use & Zoning Initiative - 'Making it New York', 2001

This city-wide study, made by the Brooklyn Pratt Institute and the Municipal Art Society (a non-profit civic organization) claims to be the most exhaustive study of manufacturing areas of New York City in over a decade. It provides a comprehensive set of land use and zoning recommendations based on the analysis of eight prototypical manufacturing areas in the City, including the Hunts Point Peninsula.

Report of the Bronx Waterfront Task Force - Borough President Adolfo Carrion, New York, June 2003

This report shows the political standpoint of the Bronx borough Presidents' Office, prepared by Subcommittees for different sections of waterfront including the Hunts Point Peninsula. It gives recommendations for priority projects.

Developing the City's Strategy for the Hunts Point Peninsula, 2003...

At the time of this writing the City is in the midst of creating a strategy to guide development on the peninsula.

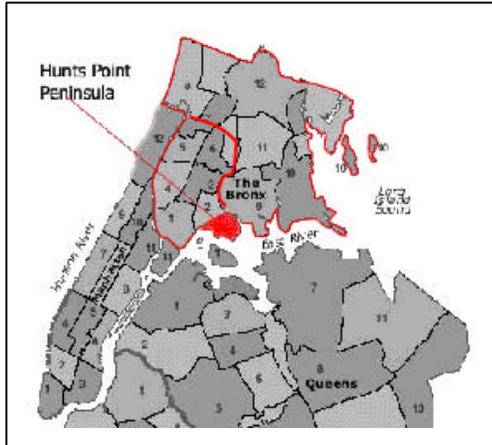
The work is being defined through a collaborative effort with the "Hunts Point Task Force", which was formed by the Bronx Borough President's Office, the Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation and City Hall and is comprised of representatives of local businesses, civic groups, elected officials and city agencies such as the Departments of City Planning, Transportation, Parks and Recreation and the Economic

Development Corporation (EDC). The idea is to coordinate ongoing projects and studies as well as to address large peninsula-wide issues and to create a unified action plan. Ongoing studies include a plan for a waterfront greenway, drafts for the designing of two proposed parks in the area, new truck routes and more. The Tasks Force's goal is a land use and transportation vision with goals for the next 20 years, the definition of short-, mid-, and long-term actions, and the implementation of the decided priority actions. The strategy is expected to be completed by April 2004.

2. Analysis

2.1 Hunts Point in Brief

The Hunts Point Peninsula is located at the southern boundary of the Bronx Borough in New York City as shown on the map. It is part of the “South Bronx”. South Bronx



describes not only that geographical area up to about 183rd Street, but also has become synonymous for poverty, crime and burning apartment houses that occurred during the City’s fiscal crisis in the 70s’ and 80s’. It is here where the borough got its bad reputation which it is wanting to overcome. Hunts Point itself had been famous for huge drug selling and -using and for prostitution. Though crime rates have dropped throughout the 90s’, the Congressional district 16, that includes the South Bronx, is still the poorest in the country and suffers from several problems including high asthma rates within its’ population. In recent years,

there are signs of a comeback of the South Bronx.

Though abandonment rates were around 30% of all Hunts Point dwelling units in the 70s’, more recent renovation efforts had been undertaken and nearly all residential houses are in a good shape. Around 9,000 people lived in Hunts Points’ residential enclave in 1996, while some single residential houses are even inside that part of the peninsula that covers mainly industrial uses.

Hunts Point has the largest amount of industrial space in the Bronx. Typical Industries to be found here are wholesale, distribution, used auto parts shops and manufactures. A large number of the boroughs’ residents get a chance to work here - in 1996 altogether around 14.500 people have been employed -, fostering the industrial development had always been an important political issue. Because of good highway and rail access, the City relocated several large markets here within the last 25 years into a Food Distribution Center that calls itself “the world’s biggest”.



The majority of the industrial area outside the food distribution center is privately owned. While nearly all space inside the residential area is utilized, in the industrial area there is a lot of underutilized land, some may also be brownfield sites.

At the time of this writing there is no real sufficient detailed information about different land uses or vacant sites in the industrial area outside the Food Distribution Center.

A study that was undertaken by the NYC Environmental Justice Alliance points on a noticeable high concentration of waste-related businesses in the southern part of the industrial area.

Land use Information as known so far is shown in the map and aerial at the end of this chapter. The aerial photograph also contains some major project proposals as known by May 2003 within the Department of City Planning.

2.2 Concerns & Opportunities

There is wide range of different land-use related problems to be found in the area. These include inappropriate mix of uses, insufficient performance of emitting industries, missing enforcement of existing laws and poor maintenance of the infrastructure.

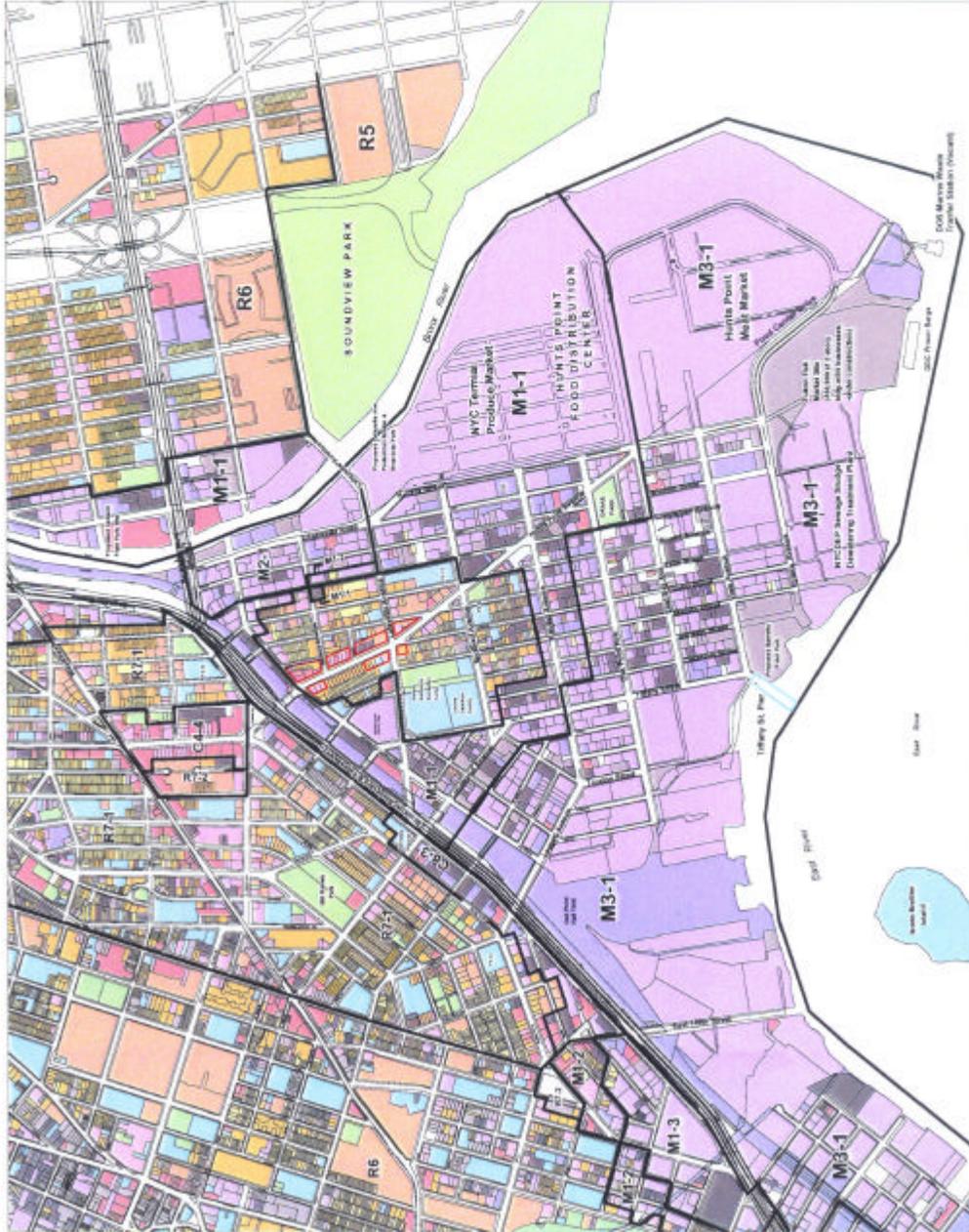
Opportunities for redevelopment include sites for new green open spaces, the physical base for a future of the residential community through the finished rehabilitation of the once abandoned houses, the potential of the surrounding streets and railway tracks for freight, at least one good option for waterfront access, and more options for giving the area a common identity by improving connecting structures like Hunts Point Avenue.

A more detailed analysis of main aspects is shown in two maps at the end of this chapter.

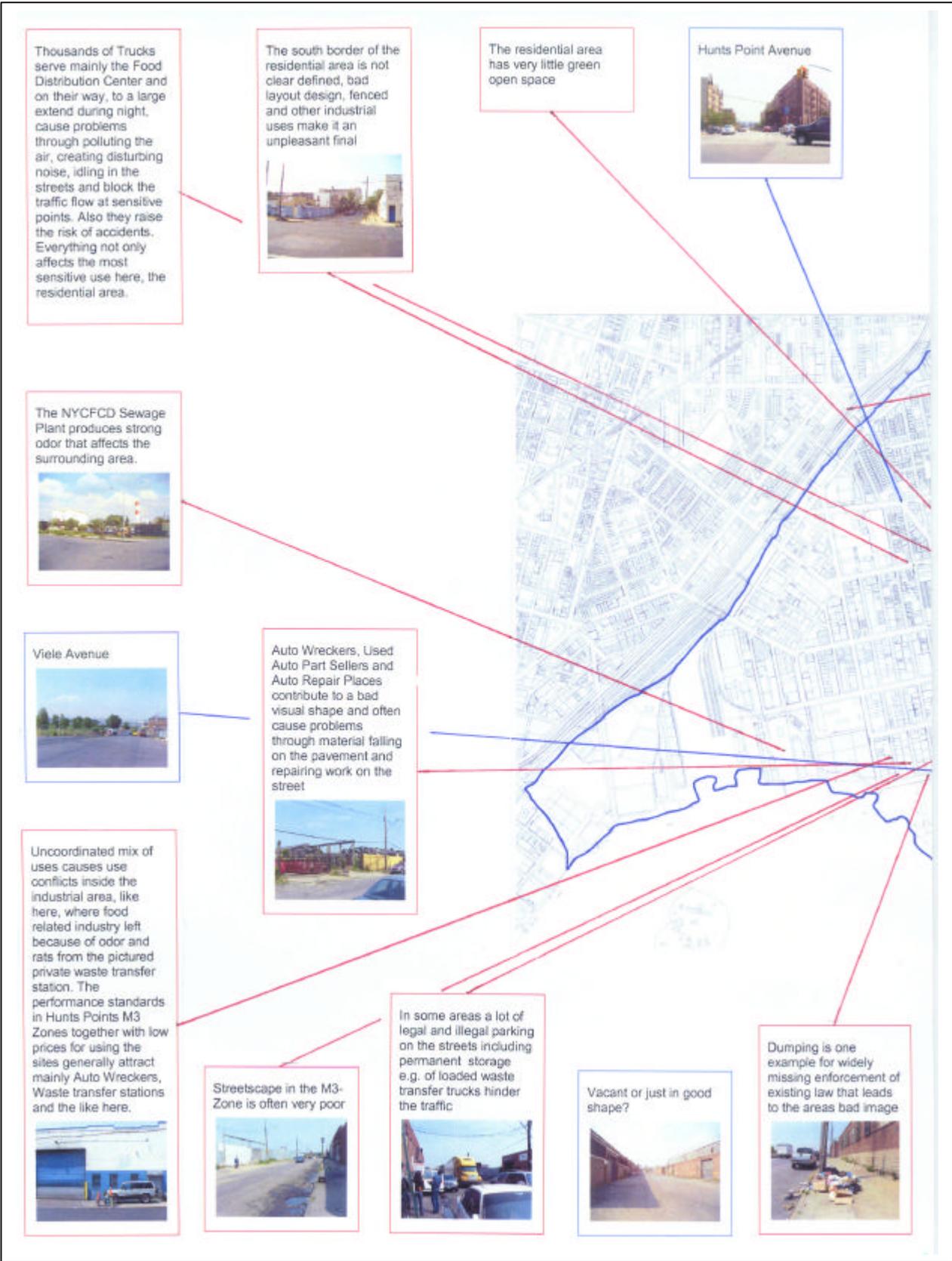
HUNTS POINT PENINSULA

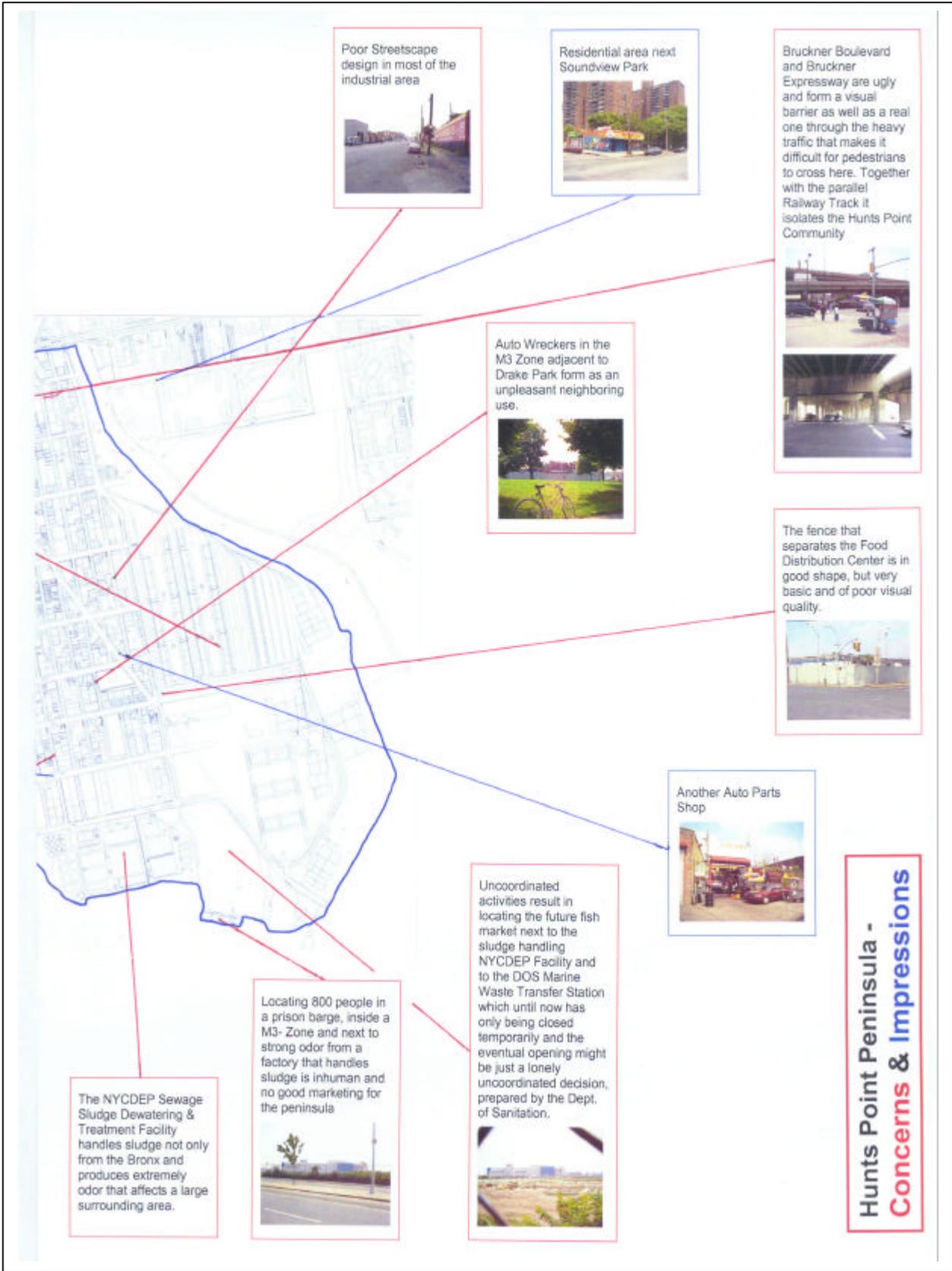
Land Use & Existing Zoning

- M1-1** Zoning District
 - C1-4** Commercial Overlay
- Land Use
- One & Two Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Residential
 - Multi-Family Elevator Residential
 - Residential / Commercial
 - Commercial
 - Industrial / Manufacturing
 - Transportation / Utilities
 - Community Facilities / Institutions
 - Parks / Open Space
 - Parking Facilities
 - Vacant Land
 - No Data



New York, Department of City Planning, Bronx Office May 2003



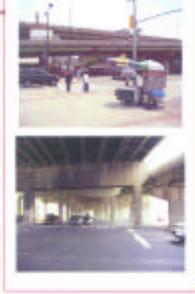


Poor Streetscape design in most of the industrial area

Residential area next Soundview Park

Bruckner Boulevard and Bruckner Expressway are ugly and form a visual barrier as well as a real one through the heavy traffic that makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross here. Together with the parallel Railway Track it isolates the Hunts Point Community

Auto Wreckers in the M3 Zone adjacent to Drake Park form as an unpleasant neighboring use.



The fence that separates the Food Distribution Center is in good shape, but very basic and of poor visual quality.

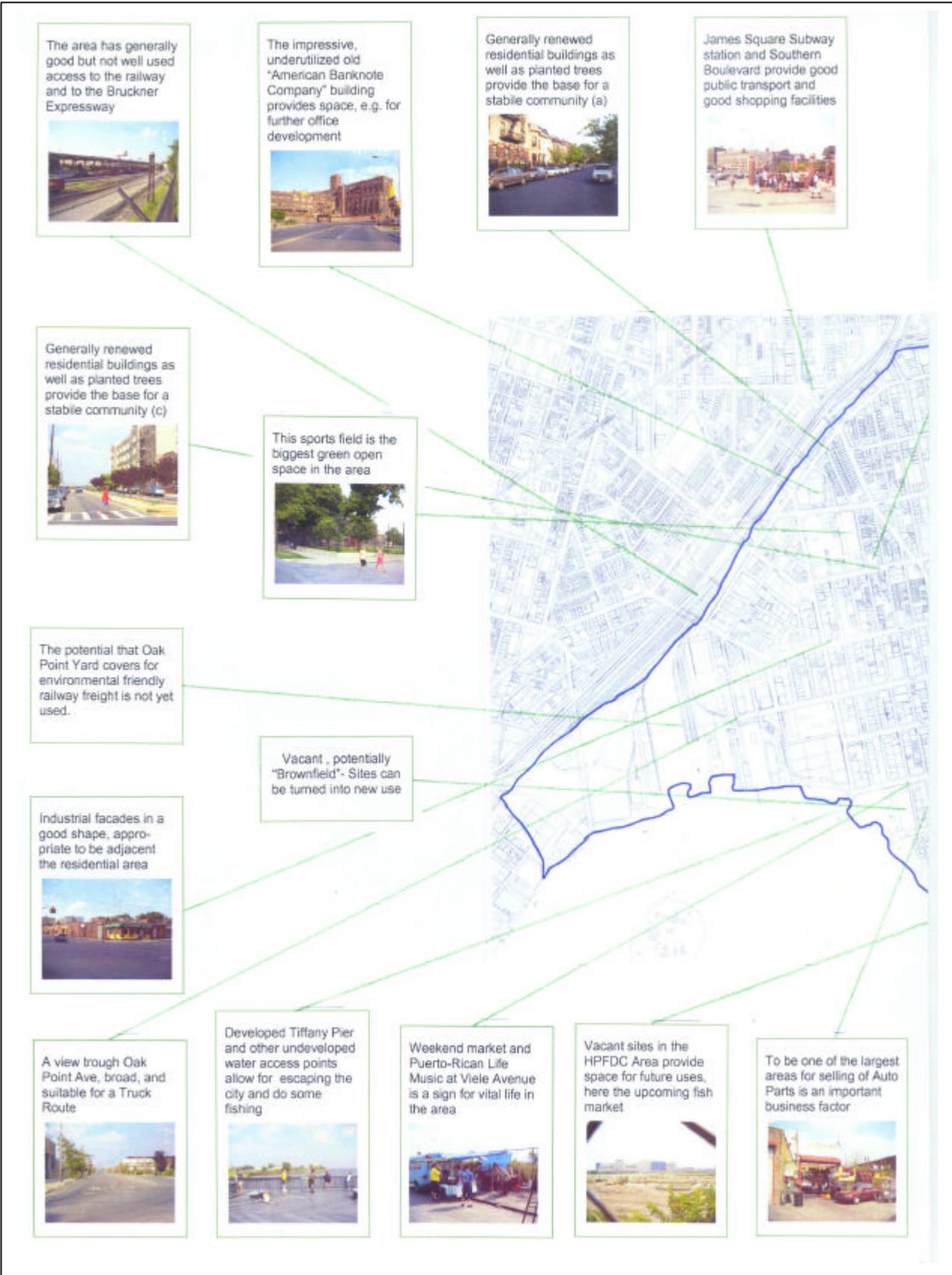
Another Auto Parts Shop

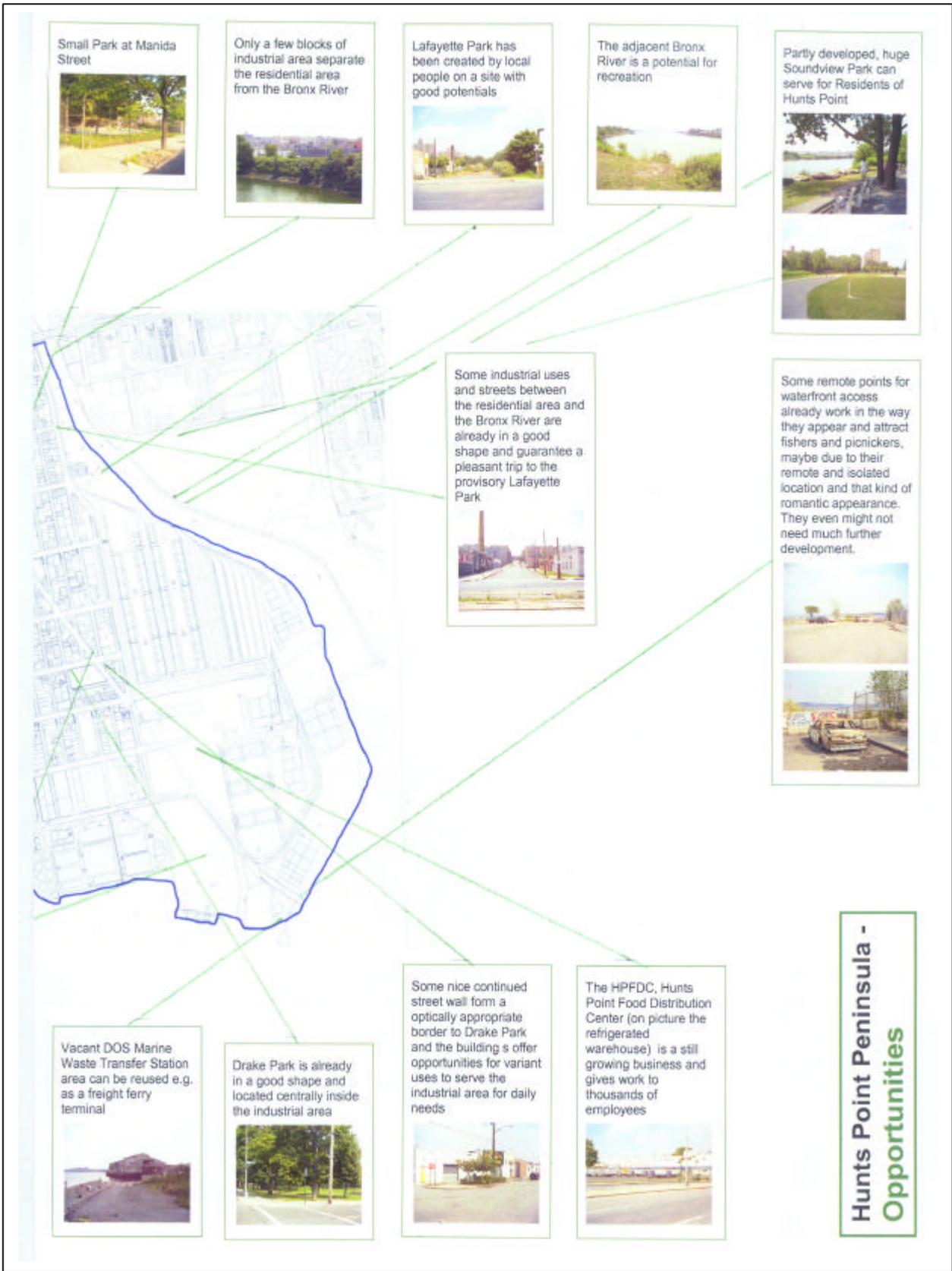
Uncoordinated activities result in locating the future fish market next to the sludge handling NYCDEP Facility and to the DOS Marine Waste Transfer Station which until now has only being closed temporarily and the eventual opening might be just a lonely uncoordinated decision, prepared by the Dept. of Sanitation.

Locating 800 people in a prison barge, inside a M3- Zone and next to strong odor from a factory that handles sludge is inhuman and no good marketing for the peninsula

The NYCDEP Sewage Sludge Dewatering & Treatment Facility handles sludge not only from the Bronx and produces extremely odor that affects a large surrounding area.

Hunts Point Peninsula - Concerns & Impressions





Hunts Point Peninsula - Opportunities

3. Recommendations

3.1 General Goals

The proposals made by this study are based on the following general goals which describe a definition of certain development needs for the peninsula and a defined way of thinking about how to deal with development tasks.

I. The area should be developed as a place to work as well as a place to live

The business uses in the area occupy most of the land area and seem to get the most of the planner's attention. Space for future business development is definitely needed in the city, especially in the Bronx which has quite high unemployment rates. While the location of the residential enclave is extremely inappropriate because of its isolation from other residential and commercial areas and the surrounding industrial uses, it would be unrealistic to relocate all of the residents to a different area and develop the entire peninsula for industrial use.

In particular the southern industrial border that faces the waterfront could further on be reserved to accommodate heavy industrial uses, as space for these uses is needed, if at the same time the residential area gets sufficient support for necessary, improvements and development options.

II. The vision for the areas' future, rather than following wishful thinking, should be built on realistic standpoints and options to provide a useful and well needed framework for future developments.

The overall and continuing decline of industrial areas in the City, the limited chance for implementing rail goods movement within the economic system of the United States and the fact that no direct highway access has been implemented during the last 40 years the Food Distribution Center has existed should be well considered putting to much hope in the effects these measures could have for lifting the industrial uses on the peninsula. When there are chances and needs to improve other uses that might have a better future here, such as the residential use, this future may not be canceled, at least if other and less affecting alternatives are available.

III. The physical environment of the residential area must be improved in order to stabilize the community.

At this time, mostly low- and some middle class people live in the area. To stabilize the community by a balanced mix of different people and thus to provide it with a good future perspective, more middle class residents need to be attracted to live here. This is even more important as there is increasing pressure that may decrease the quality of life here by, for example, letting more trucks in the area through the future Fish Market. When trendy boroughs like Manhattan and Brooklyn try to increase waterfront access, there is the side-effect that heavy industrial uses, such as power plants and similar uses, are no longer wanted there. Areas like Hunts Point are therefore in danger of becoming the future sites for more NIMBY's (Not in my backyards), noxious uses from other boroughs.

All residential areas in the so called South Bronx have suffered so much in the 70's that the borough should fight now to avoid another wave of developments that could harm the community again.

IV. Where necessary, the future land use has to be changed.

Use conflicts between different land uses have to be solved thoroughly in order to make a good future possible for each land use.

V. As far as needed, priority must be given to solve problems of the residential core.

There is no realistic way to radically solve the problems of the residential core by relocating residents out of this inappropriate area which surely will produce ongoing annoyances. So, every effort has to be made to improve the situation here, in case of conflict therefore some variances or visions for further development of the industrial area may have to stay behind.

VI. Activities have to be undertaken to improve the conditions inside each separate area (Residential Core, Industrial Area, Food Distribution Center)

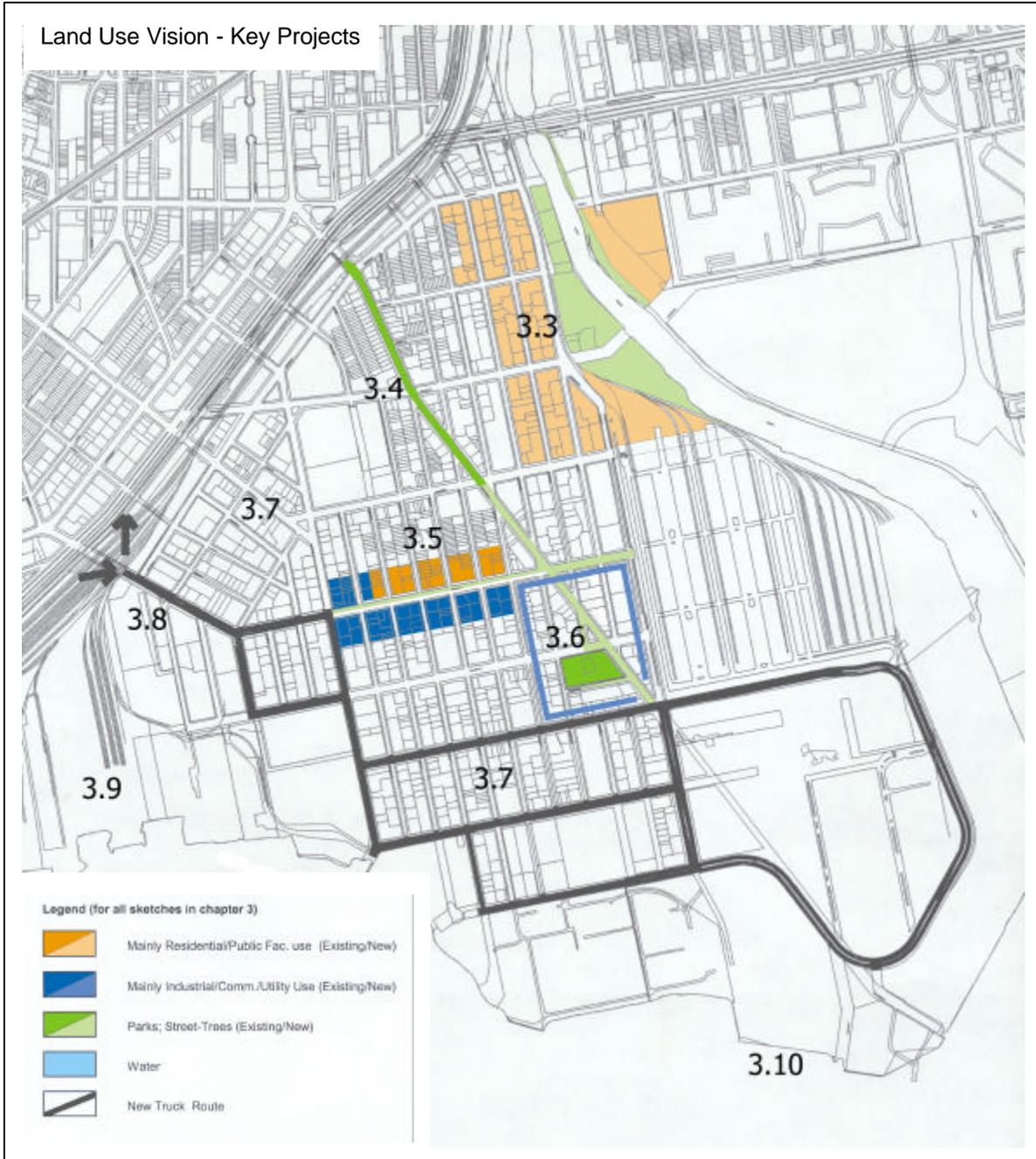
A number of actions will be possible to improve or develop the distinguished areas that will not have side effects on neighboring areas.

VII. Each individual development must fit into an integrated long term vision.

The general problems of inappropriate land use mix may continue in the future if ongoing activities ignore an integrated view on the area.

3.2 Land Use Vision

The plan gives an overview of the area and identifies key projects for possible improvements including proposed land use changes and urban design recommendations.



3.3 Project: Residential Extension and Riverside Park

When you consider the problems that the residential core suffers from, and the few chances for really substantial and noticeable improvements in the area, you clearly see the reasons why future urban development has to be focused on this area.

One often mentioned proposal for the area west of the Bronx River is the improvement of truck access to the Food Distribution Center through creating an intersection with the neighboring expressways. But when taking an interdisciplinary view on the area, one can see that there lies the potential for much more. At this place, there is actually an evident logic for residential and Park development and the need for even keeping out any truck transit, as appropriate truck route alternatives, including an option for a new highway intersection, do exist.



Park Development, Waterfront Access and Soundview Park

There are some existing proposals from local community groups and from the Department of Parks and Recreation to create new parkland within the peninsula, among them a site near the Tiffany Pier at Viele Avenue and a small site at the end of Lafayette Avenue, facing the Bronx River. A walking path alongside the waterfront at the Food Distribution Center is being studied at the time of this writing.

Beside the fact that each access point to the waterfront will for good reasons always attract some people, like, for example, fisherman, only the site at Lafayette Avenue seems to be suitable to fulfill the common demands for parks such as proximity to housing and the absence of disturbing emissions from manufacturing uses. The footpath may be an interesting project but more difficult to get built and thus of lower priority. The proposed "Barretto" Park near Tiffany pier is not suitable, suffering from its distance from the residential core as well as from odor that is emitted from the adjacent sewage plant and sewage sludge dewatering and treatment facility.

Additionally, residents would have to cross the area with the highest concentration of private waste transfer stations to get here. Air quality in recreational areas is an issue of very high importance in a borough where the statistic says that one of four children suffers from asthma.

Only the site at Lafayette Avenue has real potential for good Park Development. The proposed park is close to the residential core. It also has the potential for access to additional recreational resources. A pedestrian bridge across the Bronx River to the existing Soundview Park has already been proposed. Not to forget, there is no odor from neighboring industries and there will be no other noticeable air pollution if the existing truck route through Edgewater Road is taken away. It is for the same reasons that this park project is the most suitable and should be the first priority to improve waterfront access on the Peninsula.

Residential Development towards the Riverside “Lafayette” Park

It makes sense to develop the Park regardless of the existing land uses on the way to the residential area. Some design improvements in that industrial zone could make it more pleasant for the residents to go through. Though, the recommended proposal is to rezone this area of six blocks to allow for residential development.

The existing community will get its first pleasant border right to a first class recreational area including parkland and the Bronx River and this will result in a much better feeling of these residents to live in a place that is generally being dominated by industrial uses. Additionally, the park becomes directly accessible to the people that will use it and even more people could take advantage of new park space which, including Soundview Park on the other side of the river will be quite big. The option for new residential development justifies the efforts even more that have to be made to build the park and to buy or take some private property for doing this.

Priority should be given to finance and build a new pedestrian bridge at Lafayette towards Soundview, as the existing way across the Bruckner Boulevard Bridge is much too far away to be acceptable to pedestrians.

Keeping in mind the City’s great need for more affordable housing, here is one place to build some of it.

This described area is very suitable for residential development. Next to it there are recently renewed residential blocks and in the future there will be the proposed Riverside Park development. In addition to that there is the commercial strip in the nearby north part of Hunts Point Avenue, as well as good public transport through Bus line Number 60 at Hunts Point Avenue and through the Subway Station of the Number 6 line at Crames Square.

For the above mentioned reasons in this area residential development must have priority versus keeping the industrial use.

As there is some noticeable vacancy of similar used industrial sites at Hunts Point and elsewhere within New York City this will likely not create a problem beside necessary efforts to relocate existing companies while developing the area. The relocation has to be managed in a process based on agreement and co-operation with the existing firms in order not to damage their businesses and needs some funding.

The two blocks in the corner of Bronx River, Bruckner Boulevard and the elevated Bruckner Expressway should not be changed to residential uses because of their proximity to routes used by trucks and a heavy volume of other vehicles and because of the logic in continuing the existing industrial stretch between Bruckner Boulevard and Garrison Avenue (Area No. 1 on the map).

The next four and a half blocks to the south are the central part to develop residential. The industrial land east of these blocks between Edgewater Road and the Bronx River is as a counterpart the place for the new park development (Areas No. 2 and 3 on the map).

At a lower priority than the southernmost proposed residential blocks until Spofford Avenue and the park counterpart on its east side could be developed. The possibility for park development here depends on the will and the possibility to take this part away from the Hunts Point Food Distribution Center. This has to be checked in the context of reorganizing the different land uses within the Center area and also depends on the need for expansion, which is actually discussed (Areas No. 4 and 5 on the map).

Reconstruction and Traffic Regulation on Edgewater Road

Passing truck traffic through Edgewater Road has to be prohibited on that stretch between the proposed residential and park development, as it will be a disturbing use in this new environmental context and as there are other alternative routes for this traffic.

The roadway has to be redesigned, especially to be narrowed to a scale that is common for residential streets that carry little traffic. New street parking or eventual parking lots should be limited in size and designed in a way that does not harm the sensitive transition zone between the residential and the open space use. More likely, it should be considered to set special further traffic limitations, including limitations through redesigning the street shape to create a children-friendly area that has safe possibilities to use the street for playing and to accommodate a playground close to the new apartment houses.

This reconstruction and re-use of Edgewater Road is only possible because there is no really compelling reason to access the Food Distribution Center through here in order to get appropriate access to neighboring main streets. The traffic can find its way from the west side of the peninsula, either from the Bruckner Boulevard or from a possible new intersection with the Bruckner Expressway, as described further down in this chapter.

Riverside Development Issues on the Soundview Peninsula

The other side of the Bronx River, including Soundview Park has to be seen in a context with serving the needs of the people living in Hunts Point.

The area between Story Avenue, Colgate Avenue and the river, is presently zoned for industrial uses. To complete the Land Use vision for a harmonic use mix and urban design around the river these sites could either be developed for residential use or as an extension site for the Soundview Park. There seems not to be a need for additional park development at this site of the river, regarding the already existing, huge Soundview Park Site. However, this has to be proved and decided on a larger scale by taking in account the offers and needs for further park developments in the Community Districts No. 2 and 4. Besides this, the area itself would be very suitable for a park extension.

It is recommended to develop the area between Story Avenue, Colgate Avenue and the river for residential use in continuing the adjacent residential area. The site opens to the Bronx River on its south/west side, which beside having a nice view, provides future buildings and private open space with direct sunlight most of the day. When developing the site, a public walk path should be built alongside the river to give more public waterfront access (Area No. 6 on the map).

Implementation Issues

There is no hurry to get a project of these dimensions done quickly, but whatever gets done should be well considered. Zoning to Residential is one step; considering urban renewal or organizing funding could be others. But definitely the development should continue block by block and new developments should not be built just on every vacant parcel - this would create an inappropriate mix of uses that, even if it might not last forever, it could possibly continue for a long time. Vacant sites elsewhere can be used to relocate businesses from the blocks which are focused for development. Some sites might need to be handled as brownfield sites before starting residential or park development.

3.4 Project: Trees alongside Hunts Point Avenue

Trees should be planted on both sides of Hunts Point Avenue all the way down from Garrison Avenue in the north to East Bay Avenue in the south, where they are not already existing. Because of the great positive effects, this should be done even if it may be costly to plant and maintain them.

Missing green: The street is broad enough for trees and because of that it looks too empty without them. Trees would not hinder truck transit as the street is for good reasons not a truck route and not expected to be one in the future. Trees here will contribute to solving the area's problem of missing green space.

Strengthen the areas identity: The street has symbolic value and value for identification of the area, as it is running all through the peninsula and connects all three major areas, the residential and the industrial areas, and the Food Distribution Center.

Attract businesses: In the worn down industrial area it is important to set a kind of optimistic sign. Improvement of the industrial area's image is greatly needed to attract more businesses here.

Connecting public areas: A green Hunts Point Avenue will serve better and nicer as a connection between a new sub-center around Drake Park (as proposed in this study) and the northern commercial stripe within the residential area.

3.5 Project: Urban Redesign of Randall Avenue and Residential South Border

At the south border of the residential area there are chances to find solutions for the negative impacts the industrial uses in Hunts Point have on the quality of living here. A sufficient solution for this area needs to include changes in the land use and the streetscape design as well as a restriction for Truck Transit.



Streetscape & Closing parts of Randall Avenue for Truck Transit

The design of the streetscape has to be improved as this bordering street is extremely broad, having two lines in each direction and because it is also treeless; both do not provide a good transition to the adjacent Industrial Park.

The heavy truck transit that goes through this street to reach the Food Distribution Center has bad effects to the Residents by creating noise, odor, and chances for accidents. Because there are enough alternative routes south of this street this street has to be closed for passing truck traffic.

The suggestion is to close the street for passing traffic on the southern side of the strip between the main streets, Tiffany street and Longfellow Avenue, which can be made possible by creating a median that comes together with a line of trees. The trees will also mark the border between the different uses and might work as something like an optical buffer to the industrial area. To better mark the border and to get a sufficient design, trees are also needed on the north side of Randall Avenue facing the buildings. Trees always mark edges or create corridors, just tiny trees in the middle of the street would not be sufficient here. The north part of the street should then be changed into two way traffic to serve the residents' needs properly. The possibility to reach to north sides of the industrial blocks south of Randall Avenue should be kept through access along the streets that connect from Oak Point Avenue.

Land use mix and Layout Design in the Transition Area north of Randall Ave

Industrial uses in the south part of the blocks north of Randal Avenue could be relocated if not appropriate to the mostly residential use of these blocks either from the way they look or from the way they operate. If Relocation is not possible, the appearance of the buildings adjacent to the residential lots has to be improved and existing performance standards from the Zoning- and other Resolutions have to be enforced especially in this sensitive zone.

3.6 Project: Commercial Sub-Center around Drake Park



General Need

In the near future, after the fish market is moved to the site of the Food Distribution Center, there will be an additional need for services for employees. These services would mainly include places for recreation during breaks, eating places and small grocery stores for daily needs.

Location

Although this kind of retail use already exists, especially along the north part of Hunts Points Avenue and further north on the other side of the Bruckner Boulevard, it is recommended to increase the number and variety of retail uses here, close to the industrial park and the Food Distribution Center. One reason for this is to avoid unnecessary traffic, including traffic from people in search of street parking in the residential area, where the place for creation of new parking lots that are sufficient for the growing amount of customers is very limited. The other reason is even more obvious: a location inside the industrial area might be wanted by the employees there as it will save time.

To locate the commercial area inside the area of the Food Distribution Center would be possible, as until now there is enough free available space for the necessary developments. On the other hand, the Center is generally reserved for food-related uses. And in addition, a location on a private, enclosed site is not recommended for these uses that have public character and also have to be open to the employees of the adjacent Industrial Park.

For many reasons, the area around Drake Park fits best. It is located at the end of the most characterizing road of the peninsula, Hunts Point Avenue. Drake Park is also already developed as a nice recreation area and can serve as the “heart” of the sub-center. Some eating places already exist here. There are a number of existing buildings that would be able to house the desired commercial uses. Parking areas already exist and there are opportunities to create new parking lots, though it is likely that the majority of future customers will come on foot as they work at the Food Distribution Center, right across the street.

Zoning & Public Actions

The City of New York should try to guide the future commercial development at this area, for example by creating necessary parking lots/street parking or through giving advice. Hopefully the quality of this location itself will then attract businesses and lead to their concentration here.

It might not be necessary to change the zoning, while the extension of the existing M1 Zone one block further west from Drake Park would provide better circumstances for future development more appropriate to a commercial sub-center and a public Park in case of a higher demand for space in the future.

3.7 Project: Miscellaneous Land Use Changes within the Industrial Park

Tenable recommendations for necessary changes of the existing Land Use need specific data about the existing land use mix as well as an analysis of the existing problems. This work is still in progress at the time of writing.

One principle task is grouping of disturbing uses. The area contains a number of uses with bad impacts on the surroundings, like waste transfer stations and auto wreckers. These uses are spread over the M3 - Zone, the main industrial area. As other businesses in the area complain, there might be the need to separate these uses by limiting the area for noxious uses and thereby extending space for non-disturbing uses. The existing M1 Zone border north of Oak Point Avenue could be shifted down to East Bay Avenue to cover about eleven more blocks.

3.8 Project: Limited Truck Transit to HPFDC

- Please refer to the plan in Chapter 3.2 -

General Remarks

Good access to the industrial sites and especially the Food Distribution Center is the base for the operation of many businesses here, especially those located in the Food Distribution Center. It is also important for the future chances of the peninsula to be a further attractive and competitive place for businesses. The area is huge, and besides two railway yards, also contains numerous options for truck routes.

It is very easily possible to limit the negative effects this truck traffic has on the people who live in the residential core by choosing truck routes that neither block their nearest waterfront access options towards the Bronx River nor affect them by noise, odor and physical danger.

Regarding the long distance of each whole trip, an opportunity to always get the shortest way out of the comparable small peninsula can by no meaning be a point that has noticeable value for economic success of the affected business. Therefore protecting residents has priority, as negative side effects the truck transit has for them has been proved.

Designation of Truck Routes

As part of the proposal made in this study for new residential land use east of the existing residential core there can not be a truck route through Edgewater Road and Whittier Street north of Spofford Avenue and for the same reasons there should be no construction of a new access to the Sheridan Expressway here.

Randall Avenue can not be a truck route because of its direct proximity to the residential core. Hunts Point Avenue south of Randall Avenue should not be part of a truck route as this would impair the future services offered in the potential new Sub-Center around Drake Park.

The most northern part of Hunts Point Avenue until Garrison Avenue can not be part of the truck route, because this area is an important crossing point for Hunts Point residents that shop on the commercial strip at Southern Boulevard on the other side of the Highway. Heavy truck transit would hinder comfortable and safe crossing here besides adding another visual annoyance to the ugly appearance of the highway and producing an extra amount of odor and noise.

Access should be given through Leggett Avenue and all connecting streets south of Randall Avenue because there is the minimum impact on residents. If the construction of a highway intersection is necessary, for example because of increasing truck transport, it should also be located at Leggett Avenue. If a detailed survey finds that some curves might be considered to uncomfortable for long trucks in a long term view, the demolition of interfering houses at these intersections has to be taken in account.

Garrison Avenue can be part of a truck route south of its intersection with Barretto Street. This road might be useful for distributing traffic to or from the Buckner Boulevard.

3.9 Project: Intermodal Facility at Oak Point

This project is essential because its realization would increase environmentally-friendly rail freight through the adjacent railway network at that time when a large number of additional trucks are expected here due to the relocation of the Fulton Fish Market to Hunts Point in the near future. The EDC's 1997 study already examined the remarkable potential for transport of produce. The development of this facility should be pushed, and an up-to-date feasibility study should be implemented soon.

3.10 Project: Relocation of the Prisoners

The prison barge with 800 people is located next to the NYCDEP Sewage Sludge Dewatering & Treatment Facility and is exposed to extremely bad odor. Because a prison is a place for people to live, a setting in that kind of industrial area is inhuman. It gives the peninsula a bad image and reputation. Prisoners are not comparable to waste, odor or meat, but have to be lead back into the society.

That kind of a barge is not a place to live. Locating prisoners here in modern but small rooms is almost as inhuman as the location itself. The ship should not just be moved to the next worse area, but a new prison should be built at the edge of a residential area in New York City. The ship can then be taken out of use.

4. Implementation

The following list provides an overview of different ways for implementing the proposals contained within this report.

Zoning Changes

Zoning Changes are the easiest option to guide future development, as they allow or forbid different activities by setting a framework. They are minimally invasive and recommended wherever changes do not have to come soon, where it is not possible to find an agreement about more effective, radical policies, or where there is no money to finance side effects from public interventions like the need to buy private property. To set a framework to guide future development inside the industrial area, zoning is sufficient. Each detailed change should be well considered after a detailed analysis of the actual land uses. Possible are changes from more heavy to less heavy zones, as some problems in the area occur from noxious heavy industrial uses.

Urban Renewal Plan

An Urban Renewal Plan seems to be the most effective instrument to change the land uses near the Bronx River, in the northern part of the peninsula to residential. Some power is necessary to foster the wanted development. The process of using condemnation power and of taking private property is guided by case law and has to be well-founded. It is also time consuming. Urban Renewal Plans in New York City have gotten a bad reputation due to past Urban Renewal Plans during the 50s' through the 80s', but such a plan seems to be the right instrument for that area.

Marketing Plan

To ensure sustainable development inside the industrial area, advice and guidance for individual businesses can prevent erroneous individual decisions contributing to a continued inappropriate mix of uses. The Hunts Point Economic Development Corporation (HPEDC) is already working in this field.

Public Financing

The different existing citywide programs for affordable and low income housing should be used right now to finance the new residential development. With these programs, developers can be interested to build up residential buildings in the critical zone towards the river.

There is a good chance to obtain funding from these programs for areas rezoned to residential in Hunts Point, since the City has made a commitment to spend that money in neighborhoods rezoned to facilitate housing development (The stated goal of the City's housing plan is to create and preserve 65,000 units of affordable housing city-wide within the next five years).

For financing the development of an enlarged Lafayette Park and the Lafayette Pedestrian Bridge, money should be taken from the \$ 250 million pot that is to be set up to finance park development in the borough as a consequence of destruction of parts of Cordtlandt Park through the building of the new Water Treatment Plant there.

The money that is already continuously given to foster industrial development through the definition of the “Federal empowerment zone” in the way of tax incentives should in the future be used to support more specified, wanted development in terms of a desired land use mix by changing the applying regulations. Then, only those businesses who comply to the City’s land use and environmental goals will be able to get financial support.

Urban Design Framework

The City should agree about a masterplan for land use and urban design that draws a holistic long-term vision for the development of the area as a first step for further implementation of individual measures.

5. Planning Systems

Again, when reading the following passages, be aware that it is a complex matter to describe a City's planning system. While nothing that is said is wrong, something could as well be missing here. It has also to be noted, that in the United States the systems vary widely throughout each region of the country.

5.1 City Planning in New York

The Department of City Planning (DCP) is one of many city-wide agencies that has a role in determining the future design of the built environment. Although it has a central office, the main planning work is done in the local offices in the five boroughs. On the local level, additionally, there is a group of staff responsible for approving "As-of-Right" developments in a separate agency, the Department of Buildings (DOB). In addition, there are urban planners working in the office of the Borough President.

Community Boards exist for each of the community districts in the city (There are 12 in the Bronx and 57 in the City). They are made up of local people, elected by the leading political party and are officially involved in planning processes and decisions. They also have the option and some financial resources to create their own comprehensive "197a-(development)plan, based on "Section 197a" in the City Charter.

The central office of the Department of City Planning is responsible for some basic services like providing maps and the like. Beside this, it is the place where "policy makers", the heads of certain agencies involved in City Planning, meet with representatives of the borough offices to discuss new planning proposals, and also the place where the City Planning Commission or a group of technical staff, the "Headquarters", meet regularly to guide planning proposals through a process of participation and dispute.

The City Planning Commission is the main organ for decisions about proposals and policies within the Department and is made from a chairwoman and twelve commissioners, people elected for their experiences in City Planning. Every second week it holds "Review Sessions" to discuss planning proposals and building applications with the borough office staff and "Public Hearings" to give the public an opportunity to speak on these items.

The legal base and building-law, the "bible" for the agency's work is the New York Zoning Resolution which contains sheer masses of different regulations, covering each and every lot in the City's area and which is a few hundred pages long. It describes the political will of the New York City Government, as there is no nationwide planning law in the United States. Zoning is the procedure to create general and detailed land use regulations. Different mapped "Zones" allow for different land uses. Regulations include land use, density, parking, and manufacturing performance standards. All building activity that matches the Zoning can be done without contacting the Department of City Planning, as an "As-of-Right" development. There are a number of distinguished districts for different mixes of uses that allow for specific land uses.

All building or land use activities that are not conforming to the existing Zoning have to go through a city-charted 7 month process called the “Uniform Land Use Review Process” (ULURP). The ULURP starts with the application in form of a standardized “Land Use Review Application”. After a complete application has been received and certified by the Department of City Planning, the first part of that process starts, where the local Community Board and the Borough President are involved to provide recommendations within 90 days. Within another 60 days, the City Planning Commission then must hold a public hearing and has to approve, modify, or disapprove the application and to inform the City Council. In most cases the process continues at the City Council to get its decision during another 50 days; at the end the mayor has a five days to veto a council action. Finally, the Department of City Planning writes a report about that process. A similar procedure is used to make any changes to the Zoning Resolution itself.

The locally and city-wide organized Department of Housing and Preservation (HPD) is responsible for increasing and maintaining the City’s housing stock and for working on Urban Renewal Areas. Private local Community Development Corporations (CDCs) are involved in doing residential development. The Economic Development Corporation (EDC) is responsible for a number of sites that are in commercial or industrial, and sometimes residential, districts.

Other Agencies involved in City Planning include the Departments of Environmental Protection; -Buildings; -Sanitation; -Parks and Recreation; -Small Business Services; -Transportation and the Metropolitan Transportation Authority. For collaborative efforts, groups of agencies are sometimes formed to work together in “Task Forces”.

Comments regarding experiences with the Hunts Point Task Force

The power of City Planning in creating future visions for the built environment in New York appears to be somewhat limited. That is not only what employees of the Department of City Planning say.

The existing structure is not designed to support and facilitate comprehensive, interdisciplinary and holistic planning. Representatives of the agencies are often not used too, not willing to because of political reasons, or not experienced in making or accepting central, coordinated decisions that may provide a better overall development.

City Planning works in a decentralized way with each involved agency and the Community Boards that represent the local people having its own responsibilities. Still, above all, there is the city-wide acting Planning Commission that definitely has opportunities to create or influence city-wide policies. But again here, City Planning at that higher level has no real power to direct development but has to dispute with equal partners - commissions and city-wide agencies.

City Planning in New York works a bit more like a process of negotiating ideas, it seems to be more a stage with different actors where it depends on the amount of political power that one agency - including the Department of City Planning - has, if it can enforce their own issues, or not.

For example, community groups in Hunts Point are fighting for a new Barretto Park that will then be situated right inside a heavy industrial zone, because for them it seems easier (and probably is) to reach this goal on a site that is city-owned property.

They are acting in order to get any of the much needed new park space as well as the foot in the door to get more of the desired waterfront access. They might finally get it from the City as the City might be in need of an excuse for permission that it wants to give to the neighboring sludge treatment Facility to expand. Maybe the city even needs to make this offer to get the application for the extension past the ULURP process, where local people have a say through the involved Community Board that is representing them.

The real solution for a sustainable long term vision, though, would be to get more appropriate park space at Lafayette Park, which would need noticeably bigger efforts of the City in buying private owned sites to do so. Maybe also condemnation power would be needed to do so. While the City seems to not want to do that right now, it might in the future confront problems in maintaining that remote Barretto Park. It might also have to face the fact that people will ask for more, means they will surely complain about bad odor from the adjacent uses and by all this finally some damage will be done to the industrial zone at its center. New use conflicts will have been produced.

What is politically possible in City Planning is always a sensitive point and is felt as a thing of city-wide thinking and policy making. It is accepted for trendy boroughs like Manhattan or Brooklyn to increase residential development at the waterfront on the cost of former industrial sites and to build new, fashionable waterfront greenways for the public, but it might not be for the Bronx. The Bronx seems to be the borough responsible for taking all the unwanted noxious uses and in return, given some kind of promise for new employment or the excuse that somewhere in the City there have to be sites for heavy industrial uses. In Manhattan-focused New York, in many people's minds, the (South-) Bronx seems to be the suitable place for noxious industrial uses and also fine for continuously being a kind of backyard of the City. These and others are spoken or unspoken rules that people who decide about the City's future in society have in their minds.

Not only is a leading role of the Department of City Planning missing, but also it has few resources. In the Bronx Borough with about 1.3 Million inhabitants, the Department of City Planning, responsible for most of the local planning work, has just eleven (11) employees. Office equipment, like computers, is not up to date. Having in mind the importance given to foster economic development in the city, it is no surprise that the City's Economic Development Corporation (EDC) has much more personal and other resources and that it actually has a strong part in doing city-planning work whenever businesses are affected, like in the Hunts Point Peninsula. In Hunts Point they work with a team of several planners, even on issues like a greenway plan, while the Department of City Planning has only resources to contribute one planner and the deputy director.

It seems questionable, if it is necessary, that New York City has to approve all ULURP Applications from the single boroughs by one centralized Planning Commission for the whole City. The borough in theory would also be able to do this alone. The local Department of City Planning is actually spending a lot of time only to get to the different ULURP meetings in the central office in Downtown Manhattan.

The huge amount of "As-of-Right developments", where City Planning is not involved at all can cause problems, as this incentive for developers is based on the citywide zoning that might in many cases be inappropriate.

The reason for this is that the zoning might not have been updated for a long time due to the understaffed Department of City Planning and the huge amount of time it takes to change the zoning for a specific area. Every single lot has to be reviewed thoroughly due to the long-lasting framework for “As-of-Right” developments that is being set up during the rezoning.

It may not be effective to spend a huge amount of time dealing with a small number of applications while most of the activity is happening without any influence by City Planning on the basis of potentially outdated zoning.

Though it might not be necessary in every small case, a general good thing in the ULURP Process and in the similar one that is being used for changes of the existing zoning is that the local Community always has a say and can participate and influence decisions that will have an impact on the area where they live and work.

5.2 City Planning in Berlin

As Berlin is a Land and a City at the same time, there is a Department of City Planning for the whole City, the “Senatsverwaltung fuer Stadtentwicklung” as well as on the local level of the twelve boroughs, each one has a “Stadtplanungsamt”. City Planning locates at the central Department as far as it affects the whole City or is touching issues supposed to be of main importance for the city as a whole. The rest, actually most of the work, is done in the boroughs, although they have comparatively few staff. The head of the local as well as of the central city planning administration is elected by the political party that is in power at the time and he or she is responsible to report to his or her party.

The main base for all the planning work, the “bible”, is the “Baugesetzbuch” (Federal Building Code), a nationwide law, quite readable and not too thick. It is used in combination with collections of comments which are created on base of decisions made at courts, published by different authors as an interpretation of the law, the “Kommentare”. These books can fill from hundreds to thousands pages, dependent on the publisher and “commentator”. Also of importance for building applications and planning is another nationwide law called “Baunutzungsverordnung”. The pure law for building applications is slightly different in the countries 16 lands but is always called “Bauordnung”.

As a standard, a building application or land use change is approved after the “Bauordnung” by a special buildings department, the “Bauamt”. City Planning is in every case involved to check if the proposed actions fit in the surrounding context of its site, as demanded by “section 34” of the Baugesetzbuch.

On base of the Baugesetzbuch the administration has no political choice but has to do planning work whenever there appears a need to do it for the public welfare. Two main legal plans do exist. One, the citywide comprehensive Land Use Plan, the “Flaechennutzungsplan”, which is not specially detailed, has to be followed by all City agencies and is not directly important for private site owners. The second one is called “Bebauungsplan” and is set up in every case when there appears to be a special need for planning for one site or for a group of sites.

Both essential plans have to go through a quite long process and it may take about one or two years for a plan to obtain an approval. In many cases, it can actually take much longer, as there is no time limit. During these processes, the public and all affected agencies are involved under the leadership of City Planning. After that central “section 1” of the Baugesetzbuch City Planning has to prove all given comments and to weigh up all interests and statements to make a decision that is well founded and balances all issues. After administrative, technical control through the central Department of City Planning and final approval by the borough’s government, the plan might be attacked in court later on by affected people that did not agree about the final plan.

The Baugesetzbuch also contains a special chapter that deals with instruments for special areas, like Urban Renewal Areas, “Sanierungsgebiete”, or special areas for huge, new development, the “Entwicklungsgebiete”. To facilitate planning and development, there are stronger possibilities to direct development on private property here. The state provides a number of programs for financial support to foster development in these areas. The way they are treated and what goals are being set up varies very much from area to area and from borough to borough due to the flexibility of the given regulations.

Beside the legal, essential plans there are more “informal” ones for land use and urban design, that can be set up to guide and facilitate the work of the Department of City Planning. One example is the “Bereichsentwicklungsplan”, made by each borough office for the entire borough. Additionally there are a number of sectoral and comprehensive informal plans made by the central department and for the whole City.

Comments regarding experiences in the Borough of “Prenzlauer Berg”

The structure given by the federal building law generally seems to be appropriate to organize planning on the local city-level. There are a number of effective instruments that have been intensively used to (re)develop the town after the political reunion of the former DDR and West Germany since 1990; the borough still contains Europe’s largest Urban Renewal Area. To undertake these development efforts on the basis of the existing law, the City still has to spend a large amount of money, to pay consultants, to take private property or to provide funding for desired building activity. As the City and the borough meanwhile are nearly bankrupt due to different reasons, City Planning consequently became much weaker within recent years.

As every land use or building application has to be approved by City Planning, there is always the chance to influence even small development. Though, this is more in the hands of the Department of City Planning itself which duty it is just to interpret the law to approve or not approve an application. There is generally no public or political influence in these decisions, although the political head of the administration has some opportunities to influence and will do so in projects of his or his political party’s choice, depending on his own or his party’s standpoints.

The whole City planning related administration in Berlin is large, complex and old-fashioned. The way it works is in many cases ineffective or at least time consuming. The two main responsible Departments on the City wide level often compete with each other and are in addition sometimes lead by directors elected from different political parties, which worsens cooperation as well as the development of clear strategies.

Further mandatory cooperation between the local and the central City Planning administration is as time-consuming. Therefore the public process to create local building law through a Bebauungsplan can in this City take in many if not most cases ridiculous amounts of time up to several years.

5.3 Some Comments on Differences

City Planning - Policy or Administrative Task?

City Planning in Berlin seems to be in the hands of the Department of City Planning to a larger extent than in New York, where it seems to be more a matter of agreements between groups that can carry different interests.

While the former might miss some connection to reality and the backing from locals during development, the latter might be suffering from dictation from more powerful interest groups or agencies and from being too dependent on daily political issues. City Planning is always society-related policy as well as a pure administrative process of dealing with different arguments and finding technical and visionary solutions and future visions. It might be not a bad idea for Berlin to integrate more participation and for New York to strengthen the administrative power of City Planning.

City Planning is in a State of Flux

If you talk to City Planners in New York, they say, “Yes, you can do this directing, comprehensive planning in Germany, but here in New York that does not work. Actually, one would more likely say: “People are not used to it here”. Planners in the Department of City Planning say, the amount of original planning tasks within the daily work has increased during the last ten years. During the last two years it increased even more as the new elected chairwoman of the politically important citywide City Planning Commission had continuously shown a strong attitude towards qualified planning and could influence the appearance of City Planning within the context of other New York City Agencies. There is no reason why this process should not continue and that people could be convinced for the necessity of more coordinated, comprehensive planning work with a leading role of the Department of City Planning - as far, as it makes sense, of course. And areas like Hunts Point show that it can make sense.

Top Down, Bottom Up or Free Negotiation?

City Planning in Germany in general, or Berlin in particular, has some power and experience to coordinate other involved agencies and to make decisions for an integrated spatial development. Therefore, it is continuously looking for more empowerment of local people to act politically, looking to examples like Melrose Commons in the Bronx.

City Planning in New York based on and dependent upon decisions of single agencies and policy makers like the local community boards - decisions are made by negotiating and are dependent on how powerful each interest group or city agency is. New York might have a need to encourage the Department of City Planning to have more power on certain decisions, even to waive opinions of strong interest groups, if they are incompatible with the needs of the whole city.

City Planning as a Mirror of Society?

What City Planning should do or finally can do, will always be related to what the society thinks it needs. What it thinks it needs must not always be the right thing. To contribute to the best possible development of the City in the interest of the most of its people, City Planning should not only administrate ideas but has the responsibility to give advice and input to groups and agencies referring to the special abilities of its staff. When, for example, looking at the urban sprawl in the City of Atlanta with monotone or good designed but remote and car-dependent neighborhoods, and from a European view, an absolutely uninviting downtown with bad urban design and an uncoordinated mix of buildings and parking garages and streets with insufficient sidewalks, it is hard to believe, that city planning should not have the role to explain how to change this unfortunate situation. To attract bored suburban residents and to change the time-intensive car trips from here to there, approaches could be made to improve the urban design of that downtown as well as incorporating a more mixed land use near the residential areas. This all might already be underway, and is just an example that shows that City Planning has some active role in forming society's future.

6. Appendix

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New York City Department of Education	
New York City Department of Sanitation	
New York City Department of Parks and Recreation	Colleen Alderson
New York City Police Department	Sgt. Steve Cioffi
New York State Department of Transportation	Guy LaMonaca
Nos Quedamos	

NYC Department of City Planning Bronx Office	Kelly Murphy,
PICCED, Pratt Institute Center for Community and Environmental Development	Joan Byron
The Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation	Patrick Barnhart
The Point Community Development Corporation	Paul Lipson
Sustainable South Bronx	Omar Freilla

6.2 “Bronx History - A General Survey”

The following article gives an excellent and well condensed overview of the Bronx Boroughs History and contributes to a more round knowledge of the borough.

Bronx History: A General Survey

Adapted from an article by Dr. Gary Hermalyn and Prof. Lloyd Ultan of The Bronx County Historical Society.*

From 1609 to the 1890s

European contact with the Bronx first occurred almost 400 years ago. In 1609 Henry Hudson, probably the first European to see the shoreline, sought cover from a storm for his vessel the Halve Maen in Spuyten Duyvil Creek. Thirty years later in 1639, the mainland was settled by Jonas Bronck, a Swedish sea captain from the Netherlands who eventually built a farmstead at what became 132nd Street and Lincoln Avenue; a small group of Dutch, German, and Danish servants settled with him.

Most of the eastern half of the area now known as the Bronx was bought in 1654 by Thomas Pell of Connecticut, who invited sixteen families to form the village of Westchester near what is now Westchester Square. Westchester was between 1683 and 1714 the seat of Westchester County (which included the Bronx until the second half of the nineteenth century) and as a chartered borough was the only town in the colony with an elected mayor. In addition, it was the first town without a property qualification for suffrage: settlers chose a representative to the provincial assembly and had their own municipal court. Horses, cattle, sheep and wheat were the main agricultural products and a cottage industry in cloth making thrived.

During English rule most inhabitants were English, of English descent, or Dutch. Anglicanism was the religion sanctioned by colonial law, but Presbyterians, Quakers, and members of the Dutch Reformed church were in the majority. The first blacks, slaves from the West Indies, soon made up 10 to 15 percent of the population. Indians left the area soon after 1700. At this time the Bronx was composed of two towns and all or part of four huge manors: the town of Westchester; the town of Eastchester; the manor of Pelham, owned by the Pell family; the manor of the Morris family, Morrisania; the manor of Fordham, settled in 1671 by John Archer; and the manor of Philipsburgh, owned by the Philipse family.

The area saw constant conflict During the American Revolution. Fortifications erected by General George Washington to protect Harlem River valley proved ineffective on 12 October 1776 when British troops outflanked Continental army landing at Throgs Neck. Battle of Pell Point 18 about 750 men led Colonel John Glover Marblehead Massachusetts stayed march four thousand and Hessians enabling evacuate his White Plains In Westchester. For much rest war Bronx remained hands was subjected raids rebels that caused widespread destruction. November 1783 however governor Clinton began a from Van Cortlandt Mansion take possession New York City departing English.

During the early nineteenth century the chief occupations of lower Westchester County were growing wheat and raising livestock; between 1800 and 1830 the population rose from 1755 to 3023. Severe famine in Ireland and the growth of industry and commerce in the city drew thousands of Irish to the Bronx as laborers. Many Irish immigrants were employed in the construction of the High Bridge over the Harlem River, the New York and Harlem Railroad, and the Croton Aqueduct. Much of the area consisted of fertile lands that yielded fruits, vegetables, and dairy products for sale in the city. The first railroad tracks were laid over these lands, and rural stations eventually became the centers of new villages such as Melrose, Tremont, and Riverdale. As the railroad was extended, the center of population shifted west from the area east of the Bronx River, and the towns of West Farms (1846) and Morrisania (1855) were established.

Economic opportunity in the United States and a failed revolution in Germany in 1848 led thousands of Germans to move to the Bronx. Many settled in Melrose and Morrisania and became shopkeepers, brewers, and saloon owners. In 1863 the Janes and Beebe ironworks at 149th Street and Brook Avenue produced the dome for the Capitol in Washington, D.C.

By the late 1860s it was generally assumed that the towns on the mainland would be annexed by New York City as it expanded northward. In 1868 Morrisania numbered its streets to make them conform to those of the city, and in the following year the municipal parks department was given control of the bridges over the Harlem River and the streets leading to them. In 1874 the towns of Morrisania, West Farms, and Kingsbridge were annexed to the city; known as the Annexed District, they were placed under the jurisdiction of the parks department and became the city's twenty-third and twenty-fourth ward. Later, in 1888, the 3rd Avenue elevated line was extended to 132nd Street, precipitating the most rapid growth the Bronx had ever seen.

From the 1890s to the 1990s

By the late 1890s there was strong support in parts of Eastchester, Pelham, and the village of Wakefield for consolidating with New York City the area east of the Bronx River, along with Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island. Most people assumed that high real estate values in Manhattan would cover the public debt already incurred by the towns and pay for further public improvements being planned.

After consolidation in 1898 the twenty-third and twenty-fourth wards became the borough of the Bronx, which with Manhattan remained part of New York County (the other boroughs were already separate counties).

But the journey from the Bronx to the courts in southern Manhattan was so long that inhabitants of the Bronx soon petitioned for county designation.

It was not until 1912, however, that the state legislature established the County of the Bronx as the sixty-second county in the state, effective 1 January 1914.

In 1904 the first subway connecting the Bronx to Manhattan was built under 149th Street, providing cheap rapid transit that with the 3rd Avenue elevated line persuaded hundreds of thousands during the first third of the twentieth century to leave tenements in Manhattan for spacious new apartments in the Bronx. Yugoslavians, Armenians, and Italians were among those who made the move, but the largest group was Jews from central and eastern Europe.

With the influx of population in the first third of the century the economy of the Bronx grew rapidly. The 3rd Avenue elevated line was gradually extended northward and in the process trolley lines were connected to it, forming a rapid transit line that provided access from lower Manhattan to expanses of undeveloped land. Many apartment buildings and commercial buildings were soon erected along the corridor of the elevated line, which reached its northern terminus at Gun Hill Road in 1920. In 1923 Yankee Stadium was opened at 161st Street and River Avenue as the home of the New York Yankees, who became known as the "Bronx Bombers" because of the large number of home runs hit in the following decades by such players as Babe Ruth, Lou Gehrig, Joe DiMaggio, Mickey Mantle, Roger Maris, and Reggie Jackson.

The onset of the Depression ended the period of tremendous growth that had begun in 1888, but privately financed apartment buildings continued to be constructed. This was especially true of the area of the Grand Concourse, which became a symbol of social and economic success and had many apartment buildings of five or six stories with wide entrance courtyards. About 49 percent of the inhabitants in 1930 were Jews, most of whom worked in Manhattan. By 1934 the housing in the borough had many more amenities than that of the other boroughs: almost 99 percent of residences had private bathrooms, about 95 percent central heating, more than 97 percent hot water, and more than 48 percent mechanical refrigeration. The largest housing development of the time, Parkchester, was undertaken by the Metropolitan Life Insurance company. Completed in 1942, it housed forty thousand residents and had parks, playgrounds, sculptures, convenience stores, and movie theaters. Edward J. Flynn, the Democratic leader of Bronx County and an early supporter of the New Deal, secured public funds to repair streets and build the county jail and the central post office, as well as neighborhood parks.

After the Second World War new housing was built and the makeup of the population changed. Construction ranged from luxury apartment buildings in Riverdale to public housing in the southern Bronx. Long-time residents and former servicemen moved from older housing in the southern neighborhoods of Hunts Point, Morrisania, and Mott Haven into privately built housing in the northern Bronx, to the other boroughs, and to the suburbs. About 170,000 persons displaced by slum clearing in Manhattan, mostly black and Puerto Rican, moved to Hunts Point and Morrisania, as well as to Melrose, Tremont, and Highbridge. In 1950 social workers reported enduring poverty in a section of the southern Bronx.

Systematic rent control was introduced during the Second World War to prevent rents from skyrocketing as empty apartments became scarce; it soon prevented conscientious landlords from paying for repairs to their aging buildings. Buildings were often set afire, at some times by unscrupulous landlords hoping to collect insurance, and at others by unscrupulous tenants taking advantage of the city's policy that burned-out tenants should be given priority for public housing and receive money for new furnishings. A period of rampant arson in the late 1960s and early 1970s ended only after this policy was changed and a limit was imposed on insurance payments for reconstructing burned-out apartment buildings. From that time one-family houses and row houses were built, hundreds of apartment buildings restored, and several apartments converted to cooperatives and condominium units, permitting more residents of the southern Bronx to own their homes. After Flynn's death in 1953 Charles A. Buckley succeeded him as the Democratic leader of Bronx county and gained federal funds for the construction in the 1950s and 1960s of housing and a network of highways linking the Bronx with the rest of the city, among them the Major Deegan Expressway, the Cross Bronx Expressway, and the Bruckner Expressway. As commuting by automobile became more convenient, high-rise apartment buildings were erected in southern and eastern neighborhoods along the new roads, including Soundview, Castle Hill, Spuyten Duyvil, and Riverdale. Co-op city, a complex of 15,372 units built in the northeastern Bronx between 1968 and 1970, housed sixty thousand persons and was among the largest housing developments in the world. The distribution of products to the metropolitan area and the rest of the east coast became easier for industries occupying new industrial parks in the Bronx, such as those along Bathgate and Zerega avenues, and for fruit and vegetable dealers in the Hunts Point Food Market. Puerto Ricans accounted for a growing share of the population (20 percent in 1970) and became more active in politics: Herman Badillo was the first Puerto Rican to be elected to the borough presidency (1965) and later to the U.S. Congress; Robert Garcia was elected to congress in 1978; Fernando Ferrer was elected borough president in 1987; and Jose Serrano succeeded Garcia in 1990.

By the mid 1990s the population of the Bronx was increasing. It was about a third black, a third Latin American, and a third Asian and white. Some musicologists maintain that salsa music and break dancing originated in the Bronx. Puerto Ricans accounted for more than a quarter of the population by 1990, and there were also growing numbers of Koreans, Vietnamese, Indians, Pakistanis, Cubans, Dominicans, Jamaicans, Greeks, and Russians. Many Albanians settled in Belmont, many Cambodians in Fordham. Co-op City remained a successful development, luxury apartments built in Riverdale in the 1950s became cooperatives, and the housing stock continued to include the world's largest concentration of buildings in the art deco style. Entrepreneurs formed new businesses, and the borough's public schools were overcrowded with new immigrants. In the 1990s, The Bronx began experiencing a period of economic renewal and in 1997 was awarded the designation of "All American City" by the National Civic Council.

*Gary Hermalyn and Lloyd Ultan, "Bronx," *The Encyclopedia of New York City* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995) pp. 142-146.

6.3 Amerikanische Fachbegriffe

approval	Billigung
asset	Vorteil
brownfield	Industriebrache
Central Business District.....	Geschaeftszentrum im Stadtkern
challenge	Herausforderung
community participation	Buergerbeteiligung
Comprehensive Planning.....	Umfassende, multisektorale Planung
constraint	Zwang
contractor	Unternehmer
dilapidation.....	Baufaelligkeit
dwelling unit	Wohneinheit
empowerment	In-Macht-Setzung, Befaehigung
enclosure	Einfriedung
Federal Building Code	Baugesetzbuch
field survey work	Bestandsaufnahme
financing incentives.....	Investitionsanreize
hazard.....	Risiko
implementation.....	Umsetzung
incentive.....	Anreiz
Inner City	Stadt zwischen Zentrum u. Randbereich
junkyard	Junkyard
mass transit, public transport	Oeffentlicher Nahverkehr
measure	Massnahme
municipal.....	Staedtisch
open space network.....	Gruenverbindungsnetz
overarching goals.....	Uebergeordnete Ziele
planning Issue.....	Planungs-Thema, Angelegenheit
planning objectives	Planungsziele
preliminary recommendations	Vorlaeufige Empfehlungen
provisions.....	Bestimmungen
public amenities	Oeffentliche Einrichtungen

Public Housing	Sozialer Wohnungsbau
revenue	Einnahme
screening	Abschirmung / Untersuchung
site analysis	Bestandsbewertung
streetscape improvements	Strassenumbau
timeline	Zeitschiene
to abandon	verlassen, aufgeben
to accelerate	beschleunigen
to alienate	lindern
to approve	billigen
to designate	bestimmen
to enforce	durchsetzen
to enhance	steigern, heben
to facilitate	erleichtern
to foster	foerdern
to strengthen	staerken
transition	Uebergang
urban design masterplan	Staedtebaulicher Rahmenplan
Urban Homesteading	Hausbesetzung
Urban Redevelopment	Stadterneuerung
Urban Renewal	Stadtsanierung
Urban Revitalization	Stadterneuerung
Wholesale trade	Grosshandel

6.4 Deutsche Zusammenfassung

Zur Studie

Die "Hunts Point Short Study" ist im Rahmen eines dreimonatigen Praktikums im Stadtplanungsamt der Bronx im Sommer 2003 mit dem Ziel geschrieben worden, Ansätze zu einem in sich geschlossenen städtebaulichen Konzept zur langfristigen Weiterentwicklung der Halbinsel Hunts Point vorzulegen und als einen weiteren Beitrag in den zu dieser Zeit vor Ort laufenden Zielfindungsprozess zur Entwicklung einer abgestimmten Planungsstrategie einzubringen. Motivation dazu war die Feststellung, dass einige der eigenen planerischen Ideen von Denkweisen und Vorstellungen in fachbezogenen Diskussionen oder in den bereits vorliegenden Studien abwichen.

Durch das gründliche Entwickeln und die Erörterung der eigenen Vorschläge entstand sowohl die Möglichkeit, Standpunkte besser vermitteln, als auch Gründe für abweichendes Handeln der lokalen Akteure besser nachvollziehen und in Verbindung zum hiesigen gesellschaftlichen Kontext und der Rolle der Stadtplanung in New York bringen zu können. Dem entsprechend ist der Studie auch ein kleines Kapitel beigefügt, in dem Unterschiede zwischen Planungssystem und Planungsverständnis in Berlin und in New York dargestellt und reflektiert werden.

Die vorliegende Arbeit beruht auf Informationen aus eigenen Ortsbesichtigungen und aus der Teilnahme an Diskussionsrunden und Sitzungen der Hunts Point Task Force, sowie auf Bestandsaufnahmen und Planungsvorschlägen aus bereits vorliegenden Studien. Sie wurde in kurzer Zeit zu einem frühen Zeitpunkt während der Bestandsaufnahme zu einer aktuell im Rahmen einer Task Force angesetzten Studie geschrieben und will daher letztlich von der Ausführlichkeit und Endgültigkeit her keine Erwartungshaltungen erfüllen, wie sie an ausgereifte städtebauliche Rahmenplanungen gestellt werden.

Hunts Point

Die Halbinsel, die überwiegend industriell genutzt wird und im nördlichen Bereich über ein von Gewerbeflächen umgebenes Wohngebiet mit rund 9.000 Einwohnern verfügt, war in den vergangenen Jahrzehnten bereits mehrfach Ziel verschiedener Planungs- und Entwicklungsaktivitäten. So wurde Ende der 70er Jahre der heruntergewirtschaftete Wohnungsbestand umfangreich saniert. Ein anderes Konzept wurde mit dem Ziel erstellt, Sanierungsbedarf und Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten des Nahrungsmittel-Verteilzentrums für Gemüse und Fleisch zu eruieren. Nach wie vor bestehen aber sowohl erhebliche Probleme als auch Unklarheiten bezüglich der künftigen wünschenswerten Flächennutzung.

Typische Probleme sind verschiedenste Nutzungskonflikte zwischen Wohnen und Gewerbe oder zwischen gewerblichen Nutzungen. Hierzu zählen beispielsweise die durch hohes LKW-Aufkommen verursachte hohe Luft- und Lärmbelastung und die häufige räumliche Nähe von Müll- und Nahrungsmittelverarbeitenden Betrieben. Das Wohngebiet verfügt nahezu über keine öffentliche Grünflächen. Image und Erscheinungsbild des industriell genutzten Bereiches sind schlecht und viele Betriebsabläufe werden geltenden gesetzlichen Vorschriften nicht gerecht.

Vorhandene, offensichtliche Potentiale, wie z. B. die Nutzung der Wasserrandlagen fuer die Naherholung, der Anschluss des Gewerbegebietes an die angrenzende Autobahn oder die Nutzung der vorhandenen Bahnflaechen und -Verbindungen fuer einen umweltfreundlicheren Gueterverkehr, muessen noch erschlossen werden. Die Halbinsel steht ferner unter einem gewissen Entwicklungsdruck durch Flaechenansprueche von an anderen Standorten in der Stadt nicht mehr gewuenschten Nutzungen, deren Vertraeglichkeit im Hinblick auf die anzustrebende Gebietsentwicklung zu ueberpruefen ist.

Planungskonzept

Hauptziel der stadtraeumlichen Planung fuer die Halbinsel muss die Schaffung von Voraussetzungen fuer eine nachhaltige Entwicklung der industriellen- wie der Wohnnutzung in einem vertraeglichen Miteinander sein. Dabei spielt der Abbau bestehender Konflikte ebenso eine Rolle wie die Abwehr neuer, hierzu kontraproduktiver Flaechenansprueche und die Staerkung der jeweiligen Nutzungen durch die Ausschloepfung brachliegender Potentiale und Handlungsspielraeume.

Ein zentrales Projekt zur Staerkung des Wohngebietes ist die Vergroesserung des in Ansaetzen vorhandenen "Riverside"-Parkes am Bronx River, der Bau einer Fussgaengerbruecke zu Erschliessung des Soundview-Parkes auf der gegenueberliegenden Flusseite und die (perspektivische) Vergroesserung des vorhandenen Wohngebietes in Richtung des neuen Riverside Parks.

Der suedliche Grenzbereich zwischen Wohn- und Industriegebiet kann durch kleinflaechige Umnutzungen, gestalterische Verbesserungen auf industriell genutzten Grundstuecken, staerkere Kontrolle der Betriebe in Bezug auf die Einhaltung gesetzlicher Vorschriften, eine teilweise Sperrung der Randall Avenue fuer Lkw - Durchgangsverkehr und durch das Pflanzen von Strassenbaeumen weiterentwickelt werden.

Durch die Begruenung und gestalterische Aufwertung der Hunts Point Avenue, die als markanteste oertliche Strasse die verschiedenen vorhandenen Nutzungen - Wohngebiet, Nahrungsmittel-Verteilzentrum, Industriegebiet - miteinander verknuepft, kann symbolhaft das Image der Halbinsel verbessert und eine gemeinsame Identitaet gestaerkt werden.

Der mit der Ansiedlung des Fisch-Grossmarktes erwarteten Steigerung der Nachfrage nach Fast-Food, Nahrungsmitteln, Guetern des taeglichen Bedarfs und Erholungsflaechen fuer die Beschaeftigten sollte aufgrund seiner hierfuer zentralen Lage durch Ansiedlung entsprechender Angebote im Gebiet um den bislang kaum genutzten Drake Park begegnet werden. Aufgabe der Stadt ist es dabei , u. a. die Attraktivitaet des oeffentlichen Strassenraums verbessern.

Innerhalb der industriell genutzten Flaechen koennen kuenftige Nutzungskonflikte u. a. durch eine Aenderung des Zonings vermieden werden, indem beispielsweise in bestimmten Teilgebieten sensible Nutzungen wie Nahrungsmittel-verarbeitende Betriebe vor einer Ansiedlung von Muell-verarbeitenden Betrieben geschuetzt werden.

Die nachteiligen Auswirkungen des umfangreichen und breitgestreuten LKW-Verkehrs lassen sich durch die Auswahl geeigneter Strecken und durch weitere Durchfahrverbote auf sensiblen Strassen deutlich reduzieren. Ein Teilabschnitt der Randall Avenue ist zu sperren.

Eine Erhöhung des Gütertransportes auf oder parallel zur Edgewater Road in Verbindung mit einem etwaigen Anschluss an die hier angrenzende Autobahn (Von Vertretern der Stadt bislang häufig favorisierte Variante) ist abzulehnen, da künftige Entwicklungsmöglichkeiten des Wohngebietes und die Nutzung des künftig erweiterten Riverside-Parkes unzumutbar beeinträchtigt würden. Der Anschluss der Halbinsel an das Autobahnnetz sollte im westlichen Bereich in Höhe der Leggett Avenue erfolgen.

Auf dem Gelände des Oak Point Yard sollte zur Verlagerung der künftig erwartungsgemäss noch wachsenden Güterverkehrsströme auf die Bahn ein Güterverteilzentrum installiert werden. Ein erhebliches Verlagerungspotential wurde bereits für die Anlieferung von Gemüse ermittelt.

Eine eigenartige Prägung erhält die Halbinsel seit einigen Jahren durch das Gefängnisschiff, das mit befristeter Genehmigung eindrucksvoll an ihrem südlichsten Zipfel neben einer Anlage zur industriellen Verarbeitung von Klärschlamm "vor Anker" liegt. Aus humanitären Gründen sollten die Insassen in solide gebaute Gefängnisse ausserhalb von Industriegebieten verlegt und das Schiff umgehend ausser Betrieb genommen werden.

Zur Umsetzung der Planungsvorschläge bietet sich eine geeignete Kombination aus Änderungen des Zoning, Urban Renewal Plan, Marketing Plan und öffentlicher Förderung an. Sofern grössere Ziele wie die vorgeschlagene Entwicklung westlich des Bronx Rivers nicht in überschaubarer Zeit realisiert werden können, sollte bei jeder Entscheidung über kleinere Massnahmen und Projekte deren Verträglichkeit mit den längerfristigen Zielen geprüft und die Billigung oder Genehmigung vom Ergebnis der Prüfung abhängig gemacht werden. In einem ersten Schritt sollte sich die Stadt auf einen städtebaulichen Rahmenplan einigen, der für die einzelnen Fachabteilungen Verbindlichkeit erlangt. Dies kann und sollte im Rahmen der 2003 gegründeten Task Force geschehen.

Stadtplanung in New York und Berlin

Es verwundert nicht und braucht kaum kommentiert zu werden, dass das Verständnis von Stadtplanung und von der Rolle, die sie in der Gesellschaft zu spielen hat, in New York zwangsläufig ein anderes ist als in Berlin. Gleiches gilt für das zugrundeliegende Planungsrecht oder den Aufbau der mit Stadtplanung befassten Verwaltung oder auch für die Wertmassstäbe, die Planer ihrer Arbeit hier oder dort zugrundelegen. Zu unterschiedlich sind die Gesellschaften und zu unterschiedlich ist deren geschichtliche Entwicklung verlaufen.

Ein Blick "hinüber" kann aber gerade deshalb sehr aufschlussreich sein. Eine aufmerksame Bewertung des Planungsaufbaus in New York zwingt durch den immer wieder automatisch erfolgenden Vergleich mit den eigenen Erfahrungen in Berlin zu einer kritischeren Haltung gegenüber vorgegebenen Planungsstrukturen und Denkweisen und zur Reflexion dessen, "was Stadtplanung soll".

Stadtplanung in New York ist administrativ auf Bezirksebene organisiert, Entscheidungen werden aber von einer stadtweit agierenden Planungskommission getroffen.

Aufgrund des Zoning, einer Art flächendeckenden Mischung aus Bebauungsplan und Flächennutzungsplan, ist für nahezu alle Baumaßnahmen keine weitere Stellungnahme des Stadtplanungsamtes mehr erforderlich.

Weicht eine beabsichtigte Maßnahme vom Zoning ab, wird hingegen unter Einbeziehung der Öffentlichkeit ein sehr aufwendiger Abstimmungsprozess, das ULURP-Verfahren, durchgeführt. Änderungen am bestehenden Zoning werden häufig als Anpassungsreaktion an geänderte gesellschaftliche Ansprüche vorgenommen, die sich in einer hohen Zahl von ULURP-Anträgen zeigen.

Stadtplanung hat in New York zunächst einmal einen weitaus geringeren Stellenwert als in Berlin. Hierfür spricht allein die personelle Ausstattung: Alle übrigen bestimmenden Faktoren einmal unberücksichtigt, muss man zur Kenntnis nehmen, dass das Stadtplanungsamt der Bronx, einem Stadtteil mit nicht weniger als 1.3 Mio. Einwohnern, lediglich über elf Mitarbeiter verfügt.

Stadtplanung in New York ist stärker von politischen Machtfaktoren und von der kommunalen Mitbestimmung auf der lokalen Ebene durch die "Community Boards" in den Wohnbezirken beeinflusst.

Versuche zur Erhöhung der örtlichen Mitwirkung von Bewohnern an der Gebietsentwicklung werden glücklicherweise seit einigen Jahren auch in Berlin im Rahmen eines "Quartiersmanagements" unternommen. Rein entstehungsgeschichtlich muss man allerdings sagen, dass die einflussreichen und starken New Yorker Eigeninitiativen wie "Community Based Organisations" oder "Community Development Corporations" auf den Quartiersebenen als Gegenbewegung zu einem enormen Handlungsvakuum des Staates und der Stadt hervorgegangen sind, dessen Entstehung man sich für Deutschland und Berlin nicht wünschen sollte.

Die Stadtplanungsverwaltung in New York hat generell, wie auch bei der Abwicklung von Einzelprojekten und Plänen nicht in der Form eine die gesamtstädtische Entwicklung integrierende Führungsrolle, wie sie sie in Berlin hat. Vielleicht wird sich dies im Laufe der nächsten Jahre noch ändern. Nach Meinung von Mitarbeitern des Stadtplanungsamtes in der Bronx hat sich immerhin der Anteil des planerischen Handelns und Denkens an der täglichen Verwaltungsarbeit innerhalb der letzten Jahre deutlich erhöht.

Die Rolle der Stadtplanung wird immer an die Ansprüche ihrer Gesellschaft angepasst sein und sich mit ihr verändern oder selbst Einfluss auf die Veränderung der Gesellschaft ausüben. Für die New Yorker Stadtplanung wäre zu wünschen, dass sie eine stärkere Machtstellung im Verwaltungsgefüge und mehr Ressourcen erhält um die ihr zugehörige Aufgabe integrierter räumlicher Planung besser erfüllen zu können.

Die häufig in hohem Maße von Verwaltungsabläufen geprägte Stadtplanung in Berlin könnte davon profitieren, ihr Verwaltungshandeln mehr als bisher für öffentliche Mitwirkung von Gebietsbewohnern zu öffnen. Hierzu kann auf die Erfahrungen aus New York und auf die bisherigen Erfahrungen mit den Berliner Quartiersmanagementgebieten zurückgegriffen werden.



View from Soundview Park towards Hunts Point



Lonely Streets



South border of the residential area



Food and Drinks at Viele Ave - Market



Radiators & more



Hunts Point - near the Bronx River

Hunts



Good access - and a barrier, too



The junk yards ...



(Almost) fully re-occupied ...



At the end of Hunts Point Avenue



Recreation during work



Existing prison & site of new fish market

Point

