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Knitting Together Communities - Designing the Heart of Six Corners and Old Hill

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KNITTING TOGETHER COMMUNITIES

DESIGNING THE HEART OF SIX CORNERS AND OLD HILL



Samantha Bowman • Ankur Choudhary • Allie Connell • Megan Davey • Katina Decoulos • Richard Duhamel
Brooklyn Feng • Ian Finn • Doreen Guan • Sophia Liquori • Connor Moloney • Claudia Narmaroff • Emily Noonan
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UMass Amherst Design Center in Springfield

Department of Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning

In Collaboration with the City of Springfield Office of Planning and Economic Development

Senior Urban Design Studio Fall 2019 • Professor: Frank Slegers



UMass Amherst Senior Urban Design Studio with Mayor Domenic Sarno at 1 Allen Street

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Left Side: Bird's eye view of the project area. © Google 2019

Acknowledgments

The Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning, UMass Amherst, continues the successful collaboration with the Office of Planning and Economic Development of the City of Springfield in the fall of 2019. The studio is coordinated and sponsored through an agreement between the City of Springfield and the UMass Amherst Design Center.

This Urban Design Studio produced six tangible visions for re-imagining the Six Corners and Old Hill Neighborhoods through the eyes of the landscape. For this studio it was a major goal to create visions and ideas how a new community could look like. We envision a community that is inclusive and sensitive to the social and cultural context while being more economically balanced community than today. A place that provides educational services, that creates diverse small-scale business opportunities and new places to live. The framework of the landscape is a crucial element to achieve this. The landscape is how people perceive a place. Is it walkable and connected, is it safe, does it provide moments of enjoyment and relaxation in nature? Does it inspire us to come together and does it attract us with beauty? Our design area in Six Corners and Old Hill could be a place like this.

I am grateful to Mayor Dominic Sarno for his ongoing support of the UMass Amherst Design Center in Springfield.

I sincerely thank Principal Planner Scott Hanson from the Springfield Department of Planning and Economic Development for his untiring enthusiasm and great cooperation.

I further thank Timothy T. Sheehan and Brian Connors, Office of Planning and Economic Development of the City of Springfield Sarah Page, Wayfinders - Senior Vice President, Community Building and Engagement, Betsy Johnson, Maple High/Six Corners Neighborhood Council, Ibrahim Ali, Co-president, Gardening the Community (GTC), Melvin Edwards, President Maple High/Six Corners Neighborhood Council, Peter Serafino Home City Development.

I would also like to thank all other stakeholders and people that attended our meetings, came to our presentations and gave feedback and support of any kind.

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I am truly thankful for the faculty of the Department of Landscape Architecture and Regional Planning for participating and contributing their valuable comments during our studio reviews.

Finally, I thank all the students of Urban Design Studio. They were tireless and most enthusiastic. We thank them for their great work to develop and present creative ideas for the City of Springfield.

Special thanks go to students Richard Duhamel and Stephen Rezendes who have compiled all the work and carefully edited it within this comprehensive and beautiful report to provide guidance for future design and planning.

Frank Slegers

Associate Professor and Associate Director UMass Amherst Design Center in Springfield

Summarized Recommendations

Knitting Together Communities – Designing the Heart of Six Corners and Old Hill provides a framework to knit together assets and opportunities for creating a strong identity and sense of coherence for a transformative urban district in Springfield, MA. The Senior Urban Design Studio 2019 created six proposals that were searching for design opportunities that enhance the aesthetic quality of the neighborhood and increase services for the wellbeing of the residents.

The two neighborhoods are characterized by strong neighborhood leadership through committed residents, community centers and active religious organizations, and a lively culture of urban agriculture (GTC) that keeps growing and fosters a positive spirit in the community. The studio analyzed the assets of the district, engaged with residents through site visits, personal interviews with community leaders and groups, and a neighborhood engagement workshop.

Existing Conditions: The Heart of Six Corners and Old Hill is a transformative district after the 2011 Tornado. The area has seen recent street improvement and realignment, new single-family homes that replaced the destroyed ones, and a major investment in education. Still, the area has underutilized and disconnected parks such as Gerrish Park at the new roundabout, Ruth Elizabeth Park in the center, and Herriet Tubman on Watershops Pond. Watershops Pond and the Mill River are not accessible, streets have a lack of aesthetic appeal, and the One Stop Plaza commercial center on Central Street is considered an undesired place for some people we talked to.

Design Objectives: The design program was developed through the engagement with stakeholders, area observations and classical analysis of the area:

- More entrances, accessibility and programming for active and passive recreation for the centrally located Ruth Elizabeth Park
- Gerrish Park near roundabout needs to be more usable for markets and events
- Historic Mill River and Watershops Pond should be connected to the larger green network
- Public art on exterior walls through education at schools and local artists
- Synergies between Springfield College neighborhood to create new student housing and provide amenities that integrate this population for mutual benefits
- Complete streets through extensive street tree plantings, widening of sidewalks and bicycle lanes
- Stormwater management strategies: bioswales along streets, green roofs, infiltration areas in new parks, porous pavement.
- Multiple housing opportunities: vacant small lots for infill, mix housing with retail and commercial on upper floors of new buildings, adaptive reuse of historic buildings as live-work spaces
- Neighborhood amenities like a grocery store and pharmacy
- Spaces for a cultural and commercial hub including all-year activities outside - One Stop Plaza would be a good place for this

The final design proposals were presented to the Six Corners and Old Hill Neighborhood Council in December 2019 and supported by the local community and city planning officials. They are part of a complete report that is handed to the city and the community to direct further decisions and search for funding opportunities. Knitting Together Communities – Designing the Heart of Six Corners and Old Hill provides significant value to a challenged community in Springfield, MA and supports becoming a more equitable neighborhood.

Studio Project Goal

The studio goal is to knit together assets and opportunities to create a strong identity and sense of coherence for this transformative urban district in Springfield, MA.

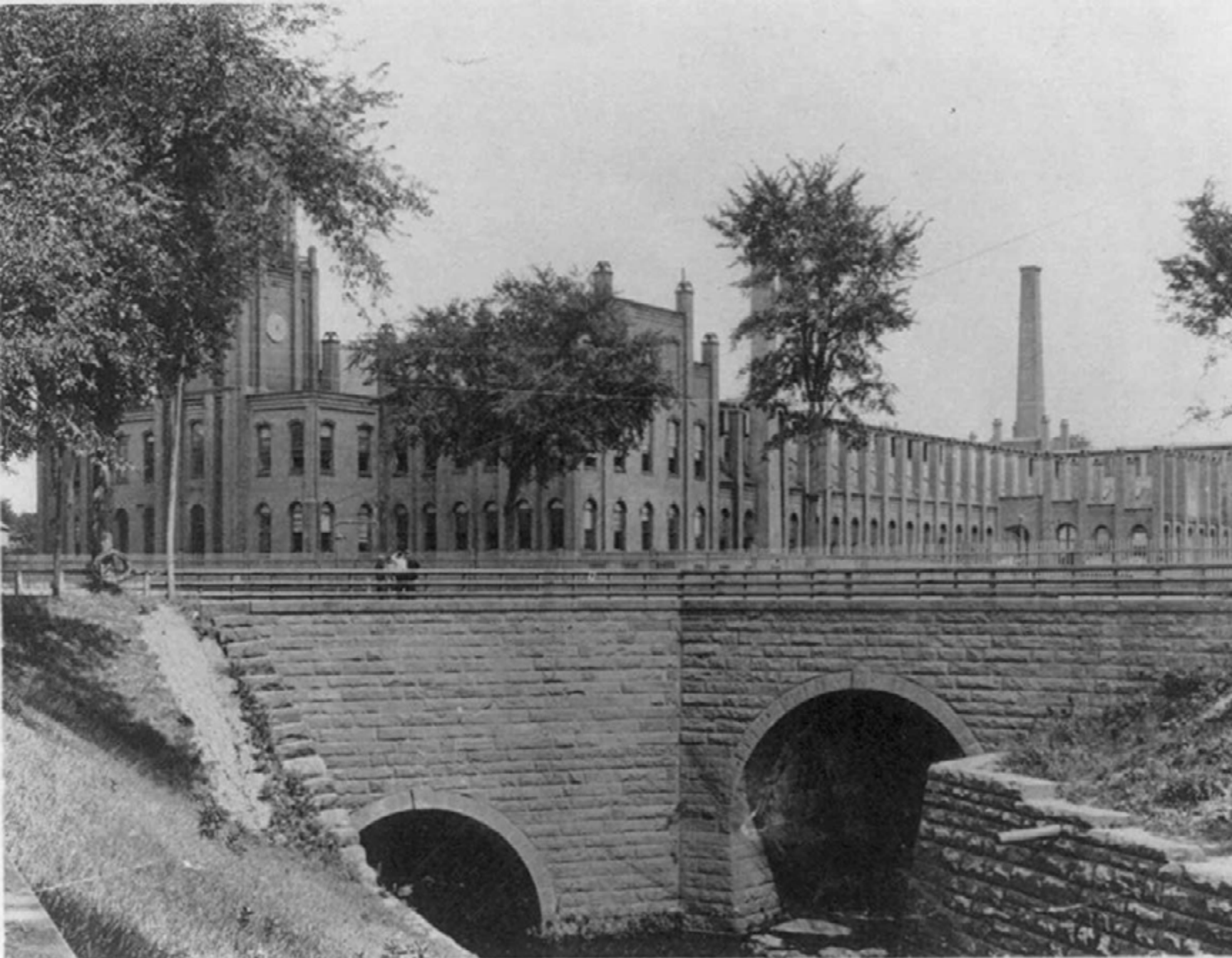
Learning Objectives

1. Define the character of urban streets and districts through mapping and walking, sketching, observing.
2. Apply tools to assess complex project areas: physical and digital models, sections, plans, video.
3. Learning about existing land uses and activities, evaluate them, and develop a new use pattern including zoning alternatives to steer future use and development and foster revitalization.
4. Learn about open space networks, topography, natural systems and processes in a city: parks, rivers and streams, stormwater, street trees and vegetation. Integrate and connect them for human uses.
5. Learning about diversity of cultures and demographics, conduct conversations with residents, stakeholders and planning officials or other experts and synthesize this information as sensitive design responses.
6. Develop spatial concepts including new parks, green streets and trails.
7. Learning about basic elements of urban design: urban form and grain, street grid and transportation including walkability and bikeability.
8. Learning to work at multiple scales and develop preliminary design concepts into refined design development drawings.
9. Excel design solutions through synthesizing case studies and literature.
10. Create high quality graphic presentations that are both attractive and informative.
11. Package a complex design into a legible format for public display.



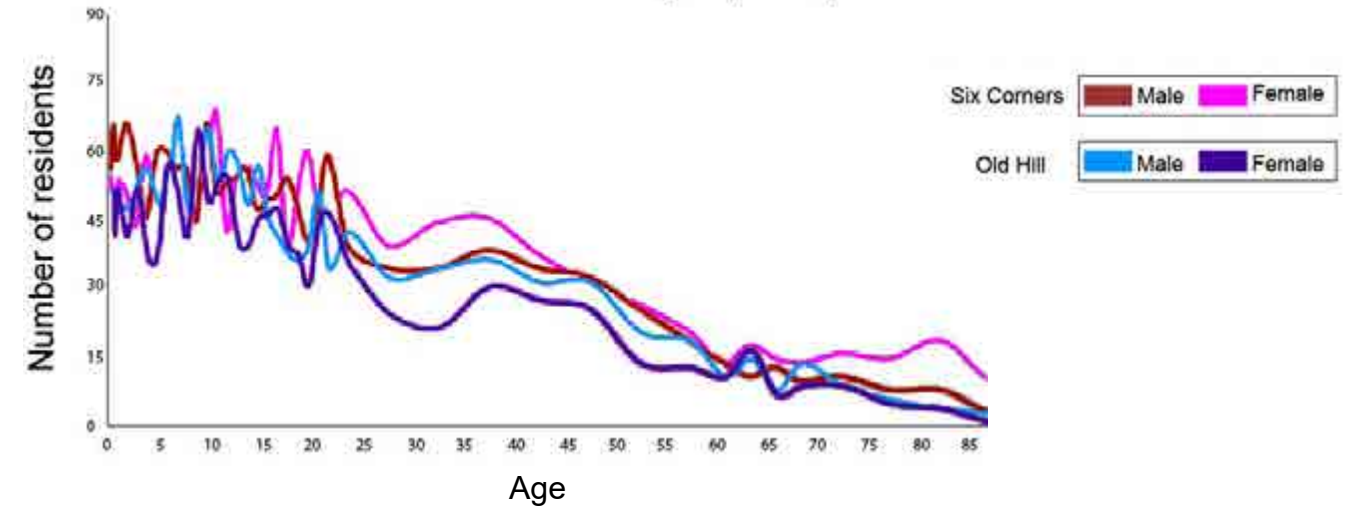
Project Area

Six Corners includes 3 historic residential neighborhoods that have evolved since the 1830s and today display a rich architectural history. Our site includes the 161 year old Watershops Armory which is listed as part of the National Register of Historic Places, which transformed Springfield into an early industrial city by manufacturing and transporting weapons to the Springfield Armory. It has recently been purchased by a Built Partnership investor, who has plans to renovate the site into a mixed use hub.



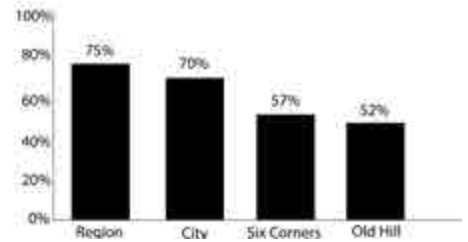
Left Side: Historic view of the Mill River and Watershops Armory in the background

Distribution of Resident's Ages (2016)

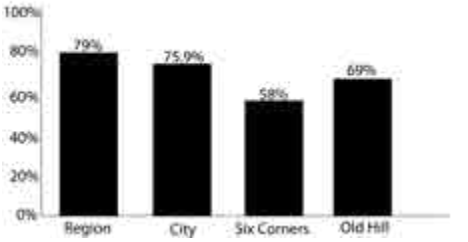


Most residents within Old Hill and Six Corners are of Hispanic and Africa American descent. Additionally, the majority of the residents in the two neighborhoods are of the younger generation as shown on the graphs to the left. Part of our studio's goal is to embrace the rich diversity in our project area and to respond to community feedback by providing a growing community for future generations. The two tables display the dramatic spike in high school graduation rates between the years of 1990 and 2011 for the two neighborhoods. Old Hill in particular has shown a large focus on educational development within the neighborhood.

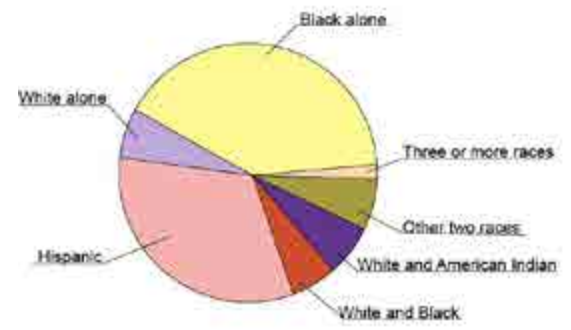
Percent of High School Graduates (1990)



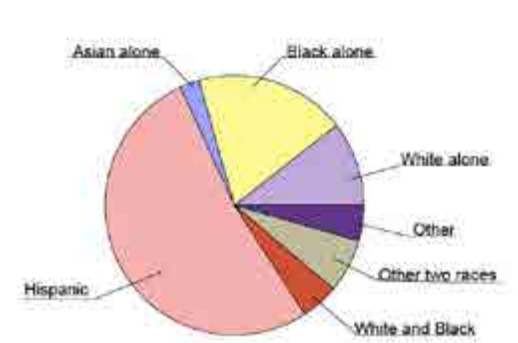
Percent of High School Graduates (2011)



Race Distribution in Old Hill



Race Distribution in Six Corners



New Projects in the Neighborhood



New Elias Brookings School

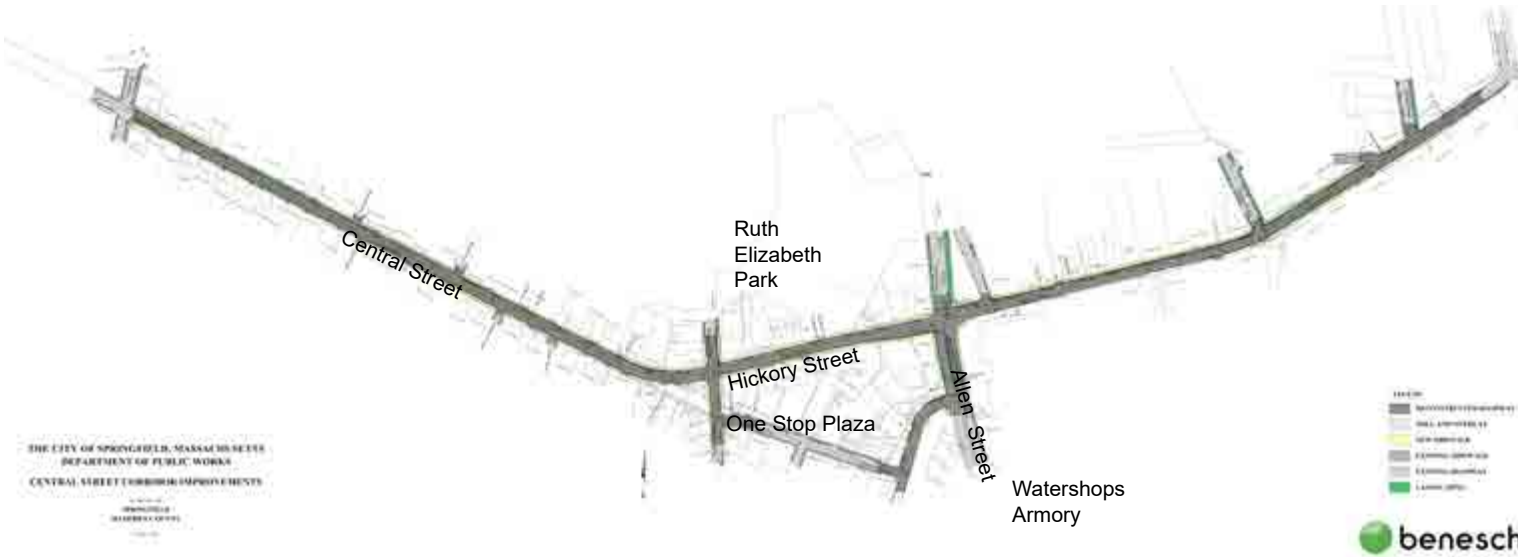


Educare Springfield



Elias Brookings Apartments

Springfield has many new initiatives and projects that are revitalizing the city. These neighborhoods have had a few large infrastructure changes on going in the area. Some including large street realignments like the new connection between Central Street and Hickory Street and the new rotary in the Northern portion of the focus area. As well as these large projects, smaller projects like Educare, the New Elias Brookings school, and the Old Elias Brookings apartments are set to have lasting effects on the neighborhood.



Central Street Re-alignment

© Bench, 2019



Six Corners Roundabout

© Fuss&O'Neill, 2014

Street System and Walkability

The Six Corners and Old Hill neighborhoods have the potential to become a very walkable community. With strong, direct connections to downtown, improvements to these streets could increase pedestrian and cyclist safety. These streets could use complete streets improvements with street tree plantings to adjust to minimize heat island effects.

Destinations

1. Springfield College (16 Min)
2. Harriet Tubman Park (11 Min)
3. Elias Brookings School (5 Min)
4. Watershops Armory (3 Min)
5. Ruth Elizabeth Park (3 Min)
6. Springfield Cemetery (10 Min)
7. Gardening the Community (5 Min)

KEY

-  = Major Roads
-  = Secondary Roads
-  = Minor Roads
-  = Center of Roundabout



Hancock Street



Walnut Street



Central Street

Zoning and Land Use

Current zoning in the design area is a representation of current and past land uses and not a directing vision for the future. In the past it was necessary to separate uses. Today most industrial uses are gone. "Industrial A" or "Business B" allows for heavy manufacturing or highway-related businesses such as auto repair shops. Existing uses that fall in this category could be still maintained. Future zoning should include more "Open Space" and "Mixed Use" zones in the area and enlarge areas with "Business A" and "Commercial A" that allow for neighborhood-oriented commercial activities and residential uses. Also overlay districts at the Watershop Armory could allow work-live spaces to mix uses and spur new investment. Vacant lots provide opportunities for infill.

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Zoning



Land Use



Urban grain is a description of the pattern of figure ground drawings in an urban area. In good urban design, the arrangement of buildings is considered as a form of art and design that balances different sizes of buildings and defines the streets and urban plazas with buildings as masses. It defines urban spaces as voids and also street corridors in a legible way to reinforce orientation. This area depicts residential areas with a fine grain and some larger buildings that are new larger institutional buildings or turn of the 19th century industrial buildings. Neither the roundabout nor the area around One Stop Plaza is defined by legible architectural edges. Our design proposals have the objective to make this area a better spatial experience and provide infill where a concentration of services for the neighborhoods is desired.

Urban Grain Figure Ground



Urban Grain and Impervious Surfaces

Buildings, streets and parking lots are depicted in red, pervious areas are depicted in green. To mitigate the negative effects of impervious surfaces on water ecology and micro climate through heat island effects, it is proposed to buffer these through green roofs, pervious surfaces and retaining stormwater on site via stormwater swales and retention ponds.

19

Impervious and Pervious Surfaces





The map to the left shows the high percentage of impervious areas in the neighborhoods. In our area there are many large parking areas and vacant lots, these lots can be transformed into pocket parks and other green spaces to reduce the levels of impervious surfaces. Our area is defined by the Mill River and Watershop's pond, these water bodies collect the water from the area and transport it to the Connecticut River.

Tree Coverage- Parks & Public Green Space

The focus area has three public parks all largely underused and unknown. An improvement to these existing parks would provide a great service to the neighborhood



The neighborhood has the lowest percentage of tree cover out of any in Springfield. Expansive planting of street trees is proposed that also have a positive effect on walkability.



Meetings with diverse stakeholders led to a better understanding of assets, challenges and goals from different perspectives. Listening to their ideas was influential for developing the design program.

City of Springfield, Office of Planning and Economic Development - Client

- Information about current projects
- Vision for long-term planning
- Challenged sites and areas need an “asset-based” approach
- Ideas about economic & cultural development

Maple High / Six Corners Neighborhood Council

- Vision for the future of the neighborhood
- Representation of the neighborhood

Gardening the Community

- A growing community within the neighborhood
- Ideas about improving bike accessibility

Community Building and Engagement

- Ideas about housing development and improvement
- Vision for long-term neighborhood changes
- Ideas for needs of the neighborhood

Home City Development

- Plans for the Old Brookings School Apartments
- Ideas for how to incorporate housing into community

University of Massachusetts Landscape Architecture Department

- Critiques on Midterm ideas
- Critiques on final projects and improvements

University of Massachusetts Architecture Department

- Critiques on Midterm ideas
- Critiques on final projects and improvements

Concerns of residents go beyond our ability to really know and understand. The group of stakeholders cannot be representative while it was beneficial for the class to respond to their comments through our design process. There is a need to address the needs of a diverse population and include equity into our thinking. Other influential components for understanding area and people were regularly area visits, on-site sketching and observations.

Engagement with Stakeholders and Development of the Design Program



Design Program:

- Redesign of large park and green spaces on site
- Housing, new and/or renovated/adaptive reuse
- Exterior wall murals
- Mixed-use buildings and spaces
- Urban agriculture
- Rain gardens/stormwater management
- Street redesign
- Engagement with Watershops pond and the Mill River
- Embrace site history and the Watershops Armory
- Introduce neighborhood amenities like a grocery store and pharmacy

The design program was developed through the engagement with stakeholders of the community.



CREATING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CONNECTIONS

26 - 41

Samantha Bowman • Allie Connell • Richard Duhamel



REDEVELOP, REUTILIZE, RECONNECT

68 - 83

Brooklyn Feng • Hunter Proulx • Vincent Shu



RESILIENT NEIGHBORHOODS

42 - 55

Doreen Guan • Sophia Liquori • Emily Noonan



WELLNESS: NUTRITION, SAFETY, GREENING, & EDUCATION

84 - 99

Ankur Choudhary • Megan Davey • Katina Decoulos



RIVER RECONNECTION

56 - 67

Connor Moloney • Stephen Rezendes • Maura Robitaille



GREEN NETWORK

100 - 113

Ian Finn • Claudia Namaroff • Jaques Skriletz



CREATING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CONNECTIONS

Samantha Bowman • Alexandria Connell • Richard Duhamel



ELEMENTS AND GOALS

Implementation of Complete and Secondary Streets

- Main traffic routes have complete streets
- Secondary roads have sidewalks and street trees

Creation of Town Centers

- Create centralized activity and separate residential uses

Redesign of Parks

- Design parks that are more usable for the community

Redesign of One Stop Plaza

Infill Housing and Residential

Add Green Infrastructure

- Curbside rain gardens
- Swales and rain gardens
- Green roofs

River Walk

- Route connecting Watershops Pond to the CT Riverwalk

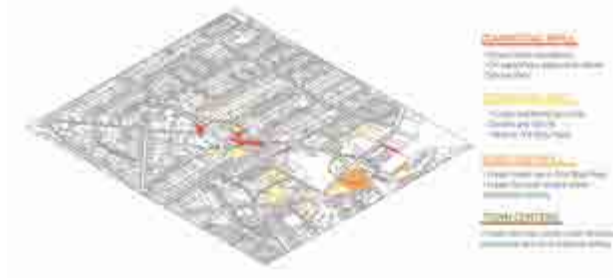
Accessibility Plan

- Create additional stops for bus routes
- Provide public bikes for alternate transportation
- Redesign bus stops in town center to include shelters and seating

CONCEPT

To regenerate the community by creating and enhancing connections to people, places, and history. Currently, there is a lack of connectivity which is dissecting the area. By designing engaging spaces that reflect the historical nature of the neighborhood and improving street connections we can create an environment that reflects the strong sense of community.

INFILL



ZONING



GOALS

- To enhance historical charm
- To create safe and more accessible roads for different modes of transportation
- To create neighborhood centers to bring everyday essentials to the area
- To create spaces for the community to engage in various activities within their neighborhood
- To create connections from the neighborhood to surrounding areas

REDESIGN





Design Plan for Ruth Elizabeth Park.

Design and Program Elements

- Connection to Old Brookings Apartments
- Stormwater Management .
- Complete Streets
- Soccer Field
- Community Garden
- Added Historical Charm
- Connecting Paths
- Garden the Community Farm Stand

Ruth Elizabeth Park is a key connection between neighborhoods of Old Hill and Six Corners. Connections are made between educational facilities, public housing, and retail centers. The design incorporates recreational opportunities such as a playground and basketball courts as well as several opportunities for stormwater management. A large outlook to the southwest corner highlights the history of the neighborhoods by providing views of Watershops Armory.



An outlook on Walnut Street provides a great opportunity to view Watershops Armory. The curving path provides a leisurely stroll to the top of the incline.



A series of seating walls are connected through sloping lawns and create a graceful transition from the residencies at the Old Brookings School.



The outlook depicted in this section engages history with a grand view towards Watershops Armory. Additionally, the steep slope is adjacent to a small basin for stormwater management.

One Stop Plaza



Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.



Design and Program Elements

- Redesigned Commercial Spaces
- Residential Infill
- Complete Streets
- Swales and Raingardens
- Green Roofs
- Outdoor Cafe Seating
- Added Historical Charm
- Connecting Paths
- Garden the Community Farm Stand

Creating Communities Through Connections

The goal of this design is to incorporate the historical aspects of Six Corners/Old Hill by referencing the architecture of the area while also adapting it to contemporary uses. Features like the shoe and mural walls are added and the community culture can personalize the area to create a sense of ownership. The redesign of the area also provides the opportunity to include green infrastructure such as green roofs and stormwater swales. These measures are applied to support Springfield's clean water goals.

Sectional elevation along Hickory Street facing south. The view demonstrates how the architecture is inspired by the historical context of the site and how it relates to the landscape in the foreground.



The streetscape is characterized by store windows and the raised seating area.



Axonometric view of One Stop Plaza and adjacent residences.



This perspective shows the relationship between the street and the buildings, demonstrating the historical and cultural essence of the neighborhood.

Harriet Tubman Park



Design Plan for Harriet Tubman Park.

Design and Program Elements

- River Walk
- College-Oriented Businesses
- Outdoor Cafe Seating
- Basketball Court
- Playground
- Interactive Swale

Creating Communities Through Connections

This design inspires to open Watershops Pond to the community and provide a green space that connects Springfield College to the neighborhood center. Harriet Tubman Park transforms into a place that relates the historical aspects to the growing future of Springfield. A new park design is a place for all members of the community to interact and enjoy the beauty of Watershops Pond.



This section shows the relationship between Watershops Pond, the large open gathering space, and Hickory Street.



Aerial perspective of Watershops Armory and the new patio on the edge of the water.



Re-envisioned pedestrian-oriented Watershops Armory.



RESILIENT NEIGHBORHOODS

Doreen Guan • Sophia Liquori • Emily Noonan



- 1 Single Family Homes
- 2 Live/Make/Work Lofts
- 3 One Stop Plaza Community Space
- 4 Historic Watershops Armory
- 5 Harriet Tubman Park
- 6 Watershops Pond
- 7 Existing Bike Path
- 8 Ruth Elizabeth Park
- 9 Gardening the Community
- 10 Springfield College
- 11 Round About Focus Area
- 12 Elia's Brooking and Educare

Creating community comes from the desire to improve the health of its members socially, physically and structurally. Three main themes of such include the physical mobility of its residents, the availability of education to improve mental stamina, and the aim to be front runners of the urban sustainability movement for surrounding communities to follow.

The focus areas of this group are the One Stop Plaza lots, Harriet Tubman Park and the new roundabout.

In each of these spaces, our aims were to unify educational options, social gathering spaces and various opportunities fro outdoor exercising.

The master plan shows new bike paths, green street systems and a new connection between all educational facilities within the area. With a low rate of long-term residents, fostering to improve education is the key incentive to making residents believe in the community and further its potential.

Green Streets and Equitable Mobility Systems on Neighborhood Arteries



Hancock Street



Walnut Street



Design Plan for the Roundabout

With this proposal for the newly constructed roundabout comes new opportunity to rethink traffic flow of vehicular, bicyclist and pedestrian means. New sidewalks would be constructed away from the main traffic with densely planted edges nearest the rotary to buffer children and pets from entering the road at unsafe moments. Bike lanes have been added to Walnut and Hickory Street to open up new transportation opportunities to this lower income area. Such lanes keep bicyclists buffered from traffic using green strips of tree plantings and on street parking spots where available.

With such a heavy influence of education in Old Hill and Six Corners, the other aim of this site was to create uses for multiple ages that are either influenced by or influence others to further their education. On one corner, this is a new cafe for studying and casual meetings. On another sits an adult learning center where residents can learn new skills such as starting up a business. This would further the incentives for young adults to stay in the area and help create a brighter future for these neighborhoods and their people.



Pedestrian views across the rotary towards a new cafe and adult learning center.

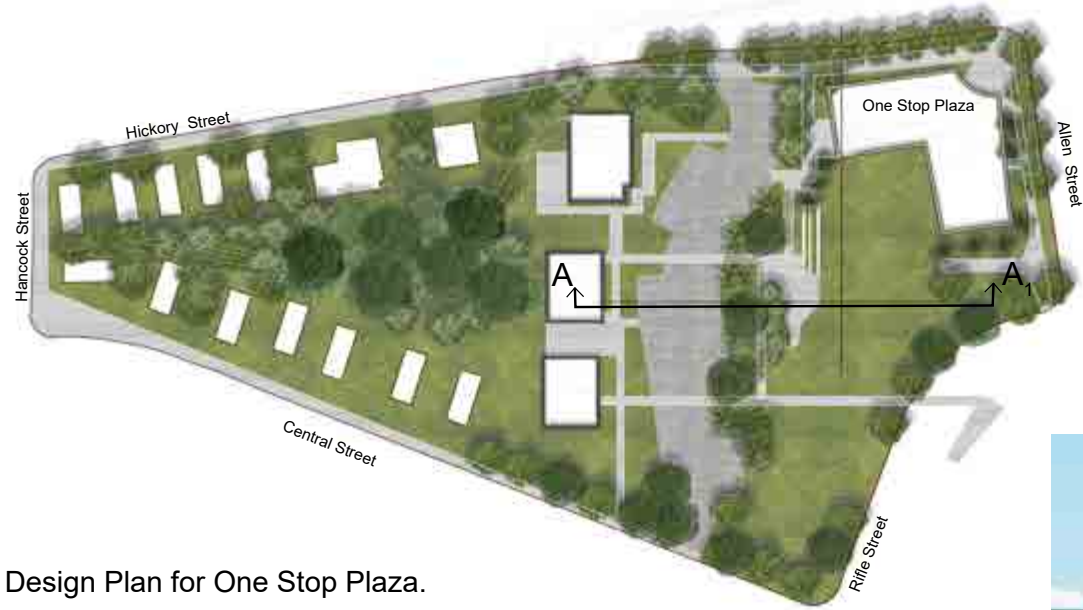


A new design for Gerrish Park maintains an open space for play away from the roundabout and near the apartment complex while allowing for more passive use and buffering for public use.



Redesigned Gerrish Park provides an ample and flexible place where public and private spaces intertwine.

One Stop Plaza



Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.

The proposal for One Stop Plaza will connect One Stop to Hickory Street, the Mill River, the Watershops Armory, and Ruth Elizabeth Park. Its excellent location provides a great opportunity for sustainable commercial and residential development as well. By repositioning the existing building footprint, shutting down Rifle Lane, and infilling the vacant lots for residential use on the plaza, the proposal will strengthen One Stop Plaza's connection to its surroundings and

Resilient Neighborhoods

create a destination for those within and outside the neighborhood. To address the community's need for single family homes, the western portion of One Stop Plaza formerly zoned as commercial will be rezoned as a special district featuring smaller 3,000 sq foot lots with shotgun style homes to offer housing diversity. Two work-make-live studios exist on site that offer residents a private patio with views overlooking the historic Watershops Armory.



Repositioning One Stop Plaza at the corner of the Hickory and Alden Street will create a more desirable location for business, as well as creating mixed use housing.



The outdoor community space is located on the lower terrace adjacent to Allen Street. The lawn is suitable for diverse activities throughout the year.



The outdoor community space can be transformed into a small community skating rink to promote healthy living. The retaining wall depicts a public art project that was executed by members of the community.



Design Plan for Harriet Tubman Park.



The Pond Walk connects Springfield College with the Armory.



The outdoor classroom engages kids and students from Elias Brooking School and Educare.



Sectional elevation facing the Armory and displaying the Pond Walk, the rain garden with perennials and an outdoor classroom in the center of the park.

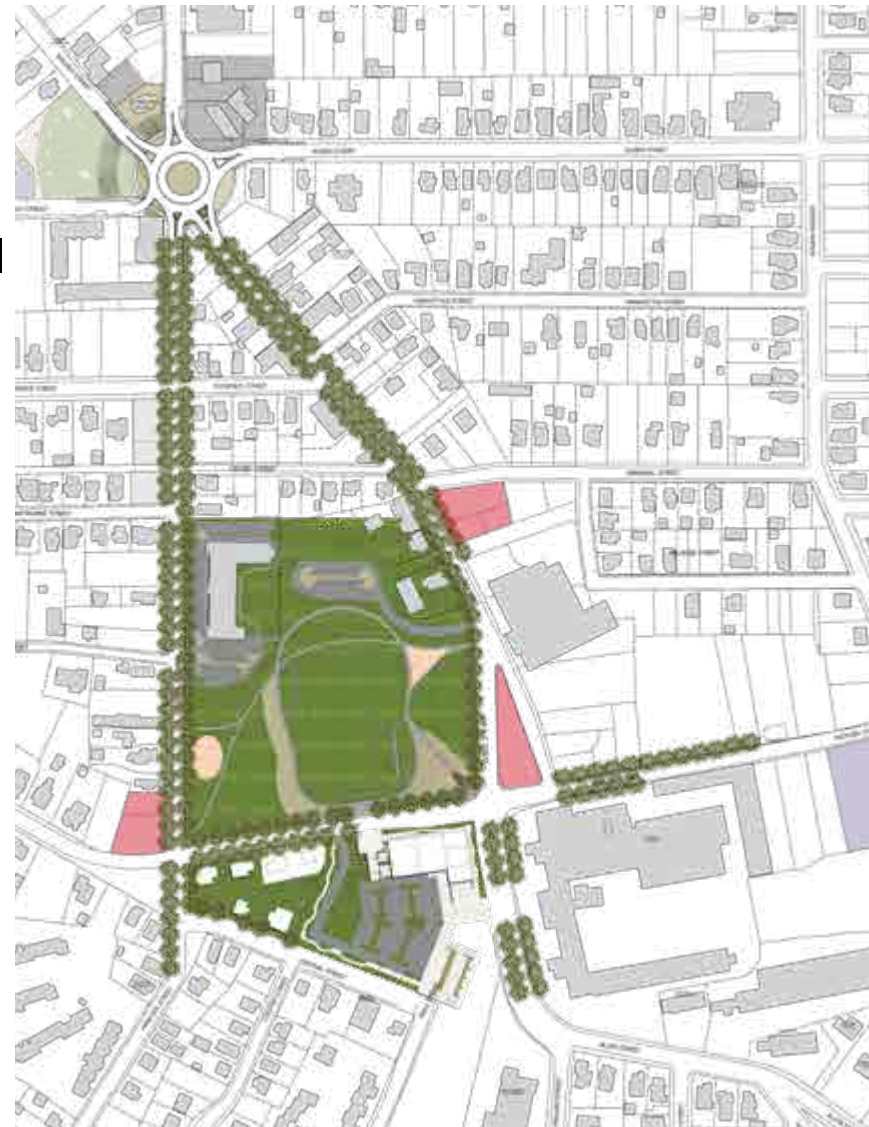
With a strong educational background, the new design concept is aimed at the children and students nearby. The open space for a fitness playground is set up in the front of the park, and the outdoor classroom is designed for students at Springfield College and the Elias Brooking School. The rain garden has perennials planted that people can also walk through, and it solves the drainage issue as well.

The Pond Walk is the essential design through the whole park. The purpose of the walk is to become a connection between Springfield College and the Armory that will attract students coming for resting, having picnic, or studying outside through the river walk. It also shows the view of the Watershops Pond with planted trees. As an important location, Harriet Tubman Park would be a nice park for the nearby neighborhood to enjoy.



RIVER RECONNECTION

Connor Moloney • Stephen Rezendes • Maura Robitaille



RELOCATE ENCOURAGE ENCOURAGE		COMMERCIAL
ENCOURAGE REMOVE ENHANCE		OPEN SPACE
GERRISH RUTH ELIZABETH		
HARRIET TUBMAN SCHOOLS ROTARY RUTH ELIZABETH ONE STOP		RESOURCES
ADAPT INFILL INFILL DEVELOP		HOUSING

Strategies and Typologies



Swales between double-stacked parking will better manage storm-water runoff.



Complete streets will ensure all members of the community feel safe.



Recognizing Springfield's geology through stone seating will respect the history of the city while also creating a uniform design language.



Repeating the design language of the Mill River's walls will enhance the community's connection to the Mill River and further develop a uniform design language.

River Reconnection aims to improve connections within the community through major interventions at three specific places. The first location is the area between the Mill River and One Stop Plaza, the second one Ruth Elizabeth Park, and the third one is the newly constructed Roundabout. Design improvements at these three locations will foster a stronger, more cohesive community.

Providing access to the Mill River will create a stronger connection between the people and its existing and overlooked ecological resources. The intervention takes advantage of Six Corner's rich history. The Mill River - the so called Miracle Mile played a major role in developing Springfield as a city. The design reconnects the Mill River with the residents and provides an important recreational resource and viewshed.

Developing Ruth Elizabeth Park creates a more inviting and encompassing community resource. The addition of interactive hills and slopes, playground elements, looping paths, and recreational fields further enhances the Park's ability as a collaborative community resource. By taking advantage of Ruth Elizabeth's location within the heart of the Six Corners and Old Hill Neighborhoods, and connecting the design with One Stop Plaza, the development of Ruth Elizabeth will cement its place as a vital community cornerstone.

Designing the Roundabout as a gateway enhances the community's character and interconnectedness. Designing the area around the roundabout as a beautiful landmark defines the community's identity. Additional programming, specifically at Gerrish Park will activate an underused and overlooked asset.



A pergola and great trees are defining the edge of Gerrish Park to provide screening from the roundabout.



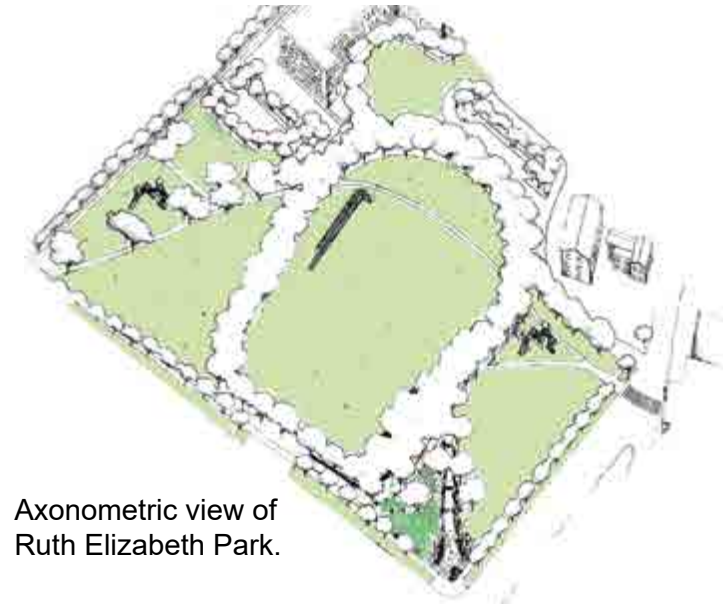
The design focuses on the transformation of Gerrish Park. It turns a once near-vacant park into a communal space and a place for the adjacent apartments on Ashley Street. The design for the area of the roundabout will create functional spaces that will attract commuters as well as residents of the neighborhoods. A grand pergola will accommodate seating and define the edge of the Park. Blocks of natural stone will be arranged parallel to the sidewalk and provide multiple opportunities to sit. Additionally, a semi-private patio area is also provided for permanent residents of the neighboring apartment complex, to maintain their private space. The redesign also offers assistance to neighboring businesses, greening up storefronts and providing more parking for additional consumers.



The redesign of Gerrish Park offers a baffled private garden space, interactive rock formations and park seating, pergola space, and a vegetated buffer to shield from the roundabout



Desing Plan of Ruth Elizabeth Park.



Axonometric view of Ruth Elizabeth Park.

The proposal for Ruth Elizabeth Park will create a community space for the various assets around the park, including new and old residential districts, Elias Brookings School and Educare, and One Stop Plaza. The proposal takes advantage of the topography of the site, creating rolling, interactive hills and terraced seating to take advantage of the views both within and out of the park. Additionally, the design creates a more inviting park by eliminating all barriers to entry and creating four delineated entrances at each corner of the park. Furthermore, a bus stop is proposed within the park's parking lot. The design for Ruth Elizabeth maintains what makes the park great, its open, multi-purpose spaces, and creates more program elements while inviting a larger community presence.



An extensive and diverse path system will provide ample opportunities for visitors and invite a variety of users. The path system will be defined a terraced landscape.



Carving into the existing topography will create exciting seating on stone terraces. Native wetland plants at the low points will take cleanse of storm-water runoff.



Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.

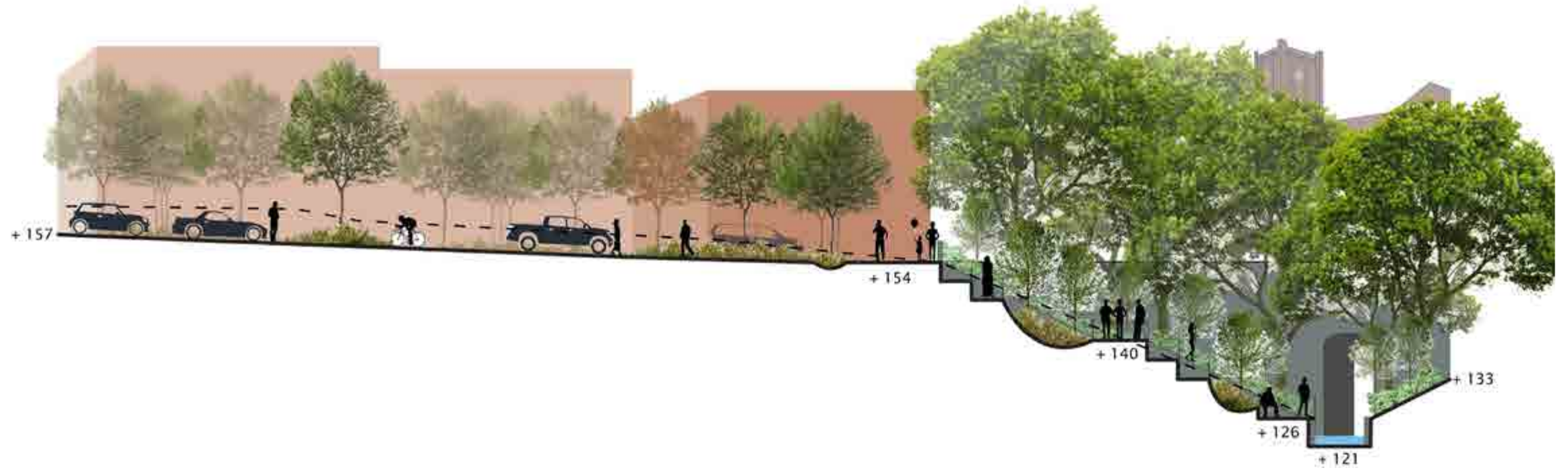
The proposal for One Stop Plaza will connect One Stop to the Central Street Realignment at Hickory Street, the Mill River, the Watershops Armory, and Ruth Elizabeth Park. Its excellent location provides a great opportunity for sustainable commercial and residential development as well. By repositioning the existing building footprint, shutting down Rifle Lane, and infilling the vacant lots for residential use on the plaza, the proposal will strengthen One Stop Plaza's connection to its surroundings and create a destination for those within and outside the neighborhood.



Mixed-use commercial and housing will be introduced while retaining old signage maintains a sense of place and creates a sustainable development.



Axonometric view of redesigned One Stop Plaza.



Daylighting the Mill River and providing access from the closed off Rifle Street will strengthen the community connection to the river and make One Stop Plaza a more desirable destination.



REDEVELOP, REUTILIZE, RECONNECT

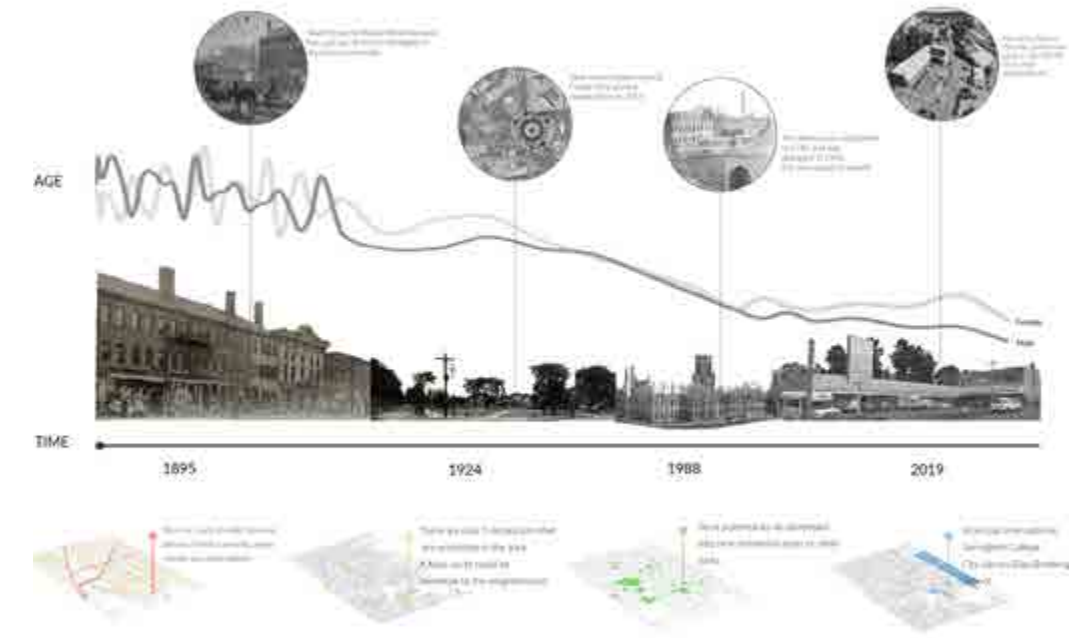
Brooklyn Feng • Hunter Proulx • Vincent Shu



ASSETS	OPPORTUNITIES
<p>Strengthen the Community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging foot traffic (if views they can see are great) could provide security. Well-developed views within the site. All open space dedicated to landscape/amenities: increased to organic growing. Further recreation for people. (Parking was added, but it wasn't, so it was and losing the amount of use of cars would be more beneficial.) - a park that can be walked to and is pleasant looking through to open streets. 	<p>Central Street Redevelopment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offers a straight shot from downtown (along to downtown). Provides access to many different parts of downtown (within the different neighborhoods). Provides housing opportunities for neighborhoods in conversion process. Community building opportunity (open city parcel land). Provides Commercial Building opportunity (open city parcel land). Provides PUBLIC Green in Downtown patterns, spaces open city parcel land. More Coherence in Right of Way (which leads to downtown). (This would be used mostly by commuters to the schools in the area and those who live in the neighborhood).
<p>Six Corners Roundabout</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> For better access and compare to the 6-way intersection. Possibility for the building of local commercial business and events near the park, such as (Sustainable Design Park). New flow of pedestrian traffic, neighborhood can be really pleasing, however, they will have connectivity through the area. Potential for Extended PVA (which includes additional bus stops). 	<p>Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Also schools in the process of being demolished. All schools are nearby each other. Creation of a clean, safe, suburban environment with community space (there's potential of YMCA, JCC, etc). (This also creates jobs). Potential for building a new (recreation) area that works off site projects.
<p>Public Open Street Space</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic or historic, city-owned lots can be transformed into green space. City transportation can meet public green space and growing green space (beneficial to companies like (PVA)). Many Existing Parks can be restored and more pleasant, more community oriented. Existing Playgrounds can be reutilized or transformed to more accessible areas. 	<p>Housing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plenty of opportunity to rebuild or build up an affordable housing. Old Elementary School (damaged by 2011) potential is planned to make affordable housing with community benefits to the site. Parts of the neighborhood park high system with behind new single family housing - can transform with the central street relocation. Considering the growing rates of the high population, new housing/multi-family, townhomes are an affordable and great option.

This proposal focuses on revitalizing the underused spaces that the neighborhood contains and creating a new systemic ground for members of the community to easily access these spaces. Case studies such as “Eat Play Grow” from the 2016 Ed Bacon Design Competition 2016 - “Designing Healthy Neighborhoods” were influential for this proposal and inspired programming and accessibility throughout this area. A central boulevard down Hancock Street southbound from the Six Corners roundabout will create a green spine. Individual focus areas each contain different zoning buffers such as open parks, residential, and commercial areas. In

consideration to making southbound Hancock Street more inviting, we intend on expanding the roads, making the through-way open, lush with landscape and attractive views. While creating this hot spot, connecting the rest of the neighborhood is our main focus. The highest priority being pedestrian/bike lanes that are accessible throughout the entire Six Corners and Old Hill neighborhoods. With this, we hope to express the importance of accessibility to healthy life habits as well as the sense of comfort, convenience, and safety in the neighborhood.





An axonometric view of the redesign of the Six Corners Roundabout.

The Six Corners Roundabout was reutilized to make the real estate not only more resourceful but more inviting to those who enter the space. Gerrish Park is newly reconditioned to create an open space for dining opportunities and seating arrangements similar to modern parks such as Pulaski Park in Northampton, MA, a nearby town to Springfield. More vegetated buffers are

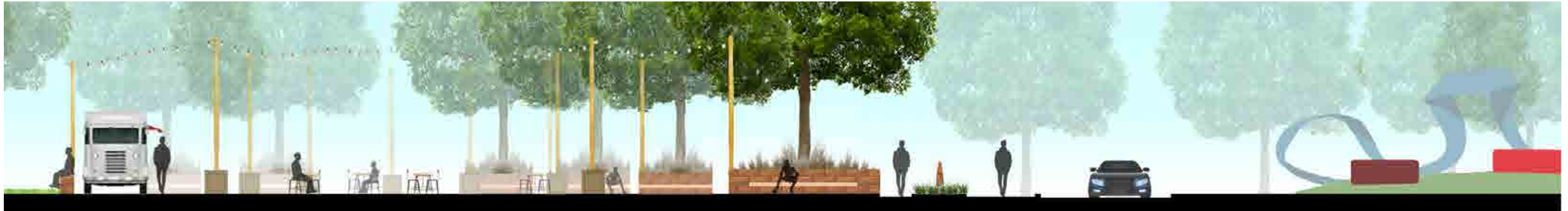
implemented in front of or within commercial and residential areas to create a more inviting and safer interaction within these spaces. Lastly, some areas were redeveloped; for example, the currently existing towing lot between southbound Hancock Street and Walnut Street is redefined as a small bank; an asset the neighborhood lacked.



Front entrance to Gerrish Park.



Perspective facing northwest towards the roundabout.



Sectional elevation of Gerrish Park facing north from west to east.



Design Plan for Ruth Elizabeth Park.

Located in-between Walnut, Hickory, and Hancock Streets lies the Old Elias Brookings School. The school was destroyed in 2011 due to natural disasters and is remodeled into a 42 unit residential building. While the preexisting soccer field remains, a system of engaging, undulating pathways intersects with a system of small gathering spaces. On Walnut Street, a new entry plaza can be used for small events. Easy access is a key feature for this area. New connections are designed for One Stop Plaza to the south as well as to the multiple educational facilities surrounding the park to the east such as the New Elias Brookings school on Walnut Street, Educare on Hickory Street, and Springfield College.



Seating elements at the Old Elias Brookings School retain the topography and allow for views into the park.



The new design focuses on creating multiple small gathering spaces around the park.



Walk into Ruth Elizabeth Park from the southwestern entrance at the corner of Hancock Street and Hickory Street. This entrance area provides multiple seating opportunities and creates a welcoming foyer for the sports fields.



Axonometric view of Ruth Elizabeth Park from the south. A system of undulating pedestrian pathways is surrounding the park and creates a continuous system of connections into the neighborhood.



Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.

South of The Old Elias Brooking School is One Stop Plaza. While offering new commercial and residential assets, a connection to the assets of nature is important and meaningful. One can be connected to the natural beauty of the Mill River by either the outlook deck on Rifle Street or, going down the slope to the river walk to get an

up-close perspective of the water. A new development of Chester Street is implemented within the design allowing vehicular circulation to access Hickory Street from Central Street. Lastly, buffers are created through landform and vegetation, separating the walk from the parking lot as well as the street.

Proposed Vegetation



Proposed Path Network



Proposed Grading



Sectional elevation of the walk along the lower terrace between Rifle Street and the edge of the upper terrace of the parking lot of One Stop Plaza.



A view of the walk and vegetated edge on Rifle Street. The vegetated edge captures stormwater from Rifle Street and cleanses it before it is conveyed into the Mill River.



Overlook Deck
Visually reconnect the neighborhood with the Armory and the Mill River

Riverside Boardwalk
Provides the neighborhood with a physical connection to the Mill River

The Overlook Deck from Rifle Street engages views down to the Mill River and the Armory. The Riverside Boardwalk physically connects people to the Mill River. A continuous walk is proposed along the Mill River to create a greenway to the Connecticut River and the larger urban greening network.



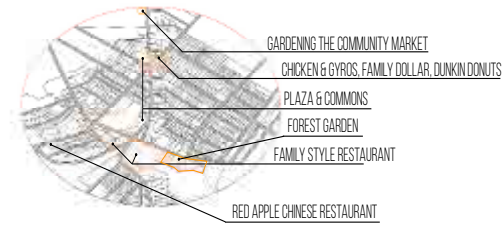
WELLNESS: NUTRITION, SAFETY, GREENING, & EDUCATION

Ankur Choudhary • Megan Davey • Katina Decoulos



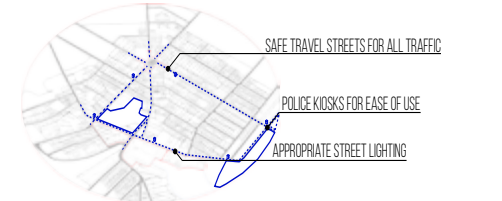
NUTRITION 🍌

MOBILE FOOD SERVICES
CLOSE PROXIMITY TO EATERIES
PLAZAS FOR SHORT DINING
MARKET FOR LOCAL VENDORS



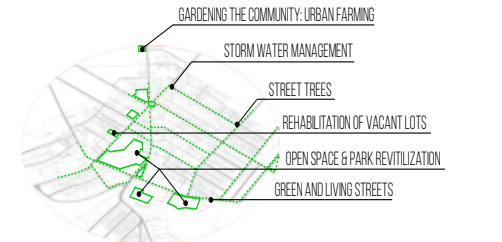
SAFETY 🚓

ADEQUATE STREET LIGHTING
POLICE KIOSKS
REDUCING TRAFFIC SPEED
PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY



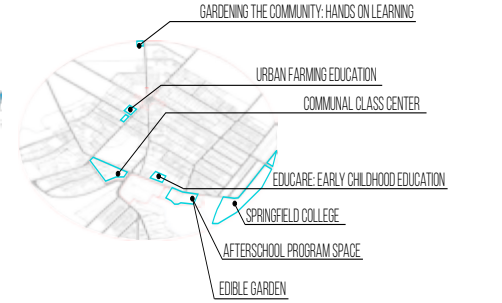
GREENING 🌿

STREET TREES
RAIN INFILTRATION SYSTEMS
RAIN GARDENS
VERTICAL GREENING
ACTIVATING OPEN SPACES



EDUCATION 📖

HANDS ON LEARNING THROUGH
URBAN FARMING
OPPORTUNITIES FOR POTENTIAL
STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
FOREST GARDEN



Design and Planning Framework

NUTRITION encompasses the significant impact that healthy food options, sustainable meals and exercise can play on a community member. A healthy lifestyle leads to healthy choices and progress in growing into much more than you once were.

SAFETY plays a huge role in the viability of a community by providing an environment that one wishes to be in. This idea focuses not only on pedestrian safety but also for vehicular traffic and bicyclists alike.

GREENING plays an important role in both the physiological health and mental health of residents, especially in a dense urban neighborhoods such as Old Hill and Six Corners in Springfield. Greenscapes not only contrast the architecture and streets but also increase property values and the overall wellbeing of residents in the community.

EDUCATION, not only in the classroom but in the public space, is vital to growing and improving the quality of life. Education encompasses the arts and the immense value in unconventional learning through developing public spaces that not only fit the needs of the public, but those that enlist a learning goal throughout daily interactions.

Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.



A new design for One Stop Plaza is desired in addition to the Central Street Realignment project and the redevelopment of the Hickory Street corridor that runs to Springfield College.

The design proposes three new buildings which will include a family-styled restaurant, a community center and chain convenience store.

There is a large deck seating area that allows visitors to meet up with friends or do work outside. This is also located next to the community center, which provides the opportunity for additional space if necessary.

The stairs leading down towards the lower terraced area acts as a walled seating area for individuals to use as they desire, or can be used as an outdoor learning space or an amphitheatre for smaller events.

The plaza is oriented towards Allen Street and Watershops Armory which allows for site lines in this populated area, creating the sense of safety on site.

All water on site leads towards the south of the plaza where it is picked up by various swales and treated in the bioretention ponds.



Allen Street

The design for One Stop Plaza engages two different levels. The upper level includes a decking patio next to the restaurant, while the lower level has an open lawn and additional seating.



An upper terraced decking area was placed in the One Stop Plaza to provide users with outdoor work space or a place to eat.



A view from Walnut Street - the entrance plaza provides sight lines that promote safety. Ample seating is provided in the sun and in semi shaded areas to provide cooling during the hot summer days.



The Watershops Revitalization project was a challenging multi-faceted design balancing the new needs of the community and the significant historical background of Watershops Armory. Previously a weapons manufacturing facility, the Armory is now the site for several small businesses, office spaces and a few warehouses. The crumbling infrastructure and the dark, unlit facade left a poor impression on the Six Corners and Old Hill neighborhoods.

Our design of the new Watershops came from a few key characteristics: close proximity to a large body of water, Watershops Pond, a key connection between the Harriet Tubman Park Redesign and the One Stop Shopping Plaza across the street. All those factors coupled with the Springfield College campus only a few blocks away made this the perfect site for a mixed-use artistic and cafe space.

The front facade was redesigned to be more inviting and engaging, featuring a large glass facade for a public artist gallery workspace.

The backyard is a multi-use daytime cafe, night time beer garden catering for the younger crowds, and especially attractive for Springfield College students.

Other provided uses for the space includes live-in artist lofts and market space for local businesses, especially Gardening The Community, a local fresh alternative to supermarkets and fast food restaurants.

Design Plan for Watershops Armory.



The new entrance into the interior courtyard of Watershops Armory: This is an inviting corridor bringing pedestrian traffic in from Allen Street.



A view depicting the proposed cafe and beer garden at the Armory, including a small concert venue and public art display.



The reconstructed Armory creates a more inviting and open facade to contrast the former entry to the Armory.



Design Plan for Harriet Tubman Park.

Harriet Tubman Park is a highly underutilized space within the Old Hill community in Springfield. Given the Park's proximity to the historic Armory, the newly built Educare Learning Center, the Elias Brookings School, and Watershops Pond, it creates an opportunity to build connections between all these important places within the community.

The Community Food Forest on Hickory Street creates a space that educates the community on nutrition through low maintenance perennials and rises environmental awareness through understanding the role of plants in its ecosystem.

The play area is improved through features that focus on education. These are play elements that engage water, a rock climbing wall, as well as musical features and spots that allow for creative learning.

A new walking loop promotes fitness and complements an updated basketball court and a skate park.

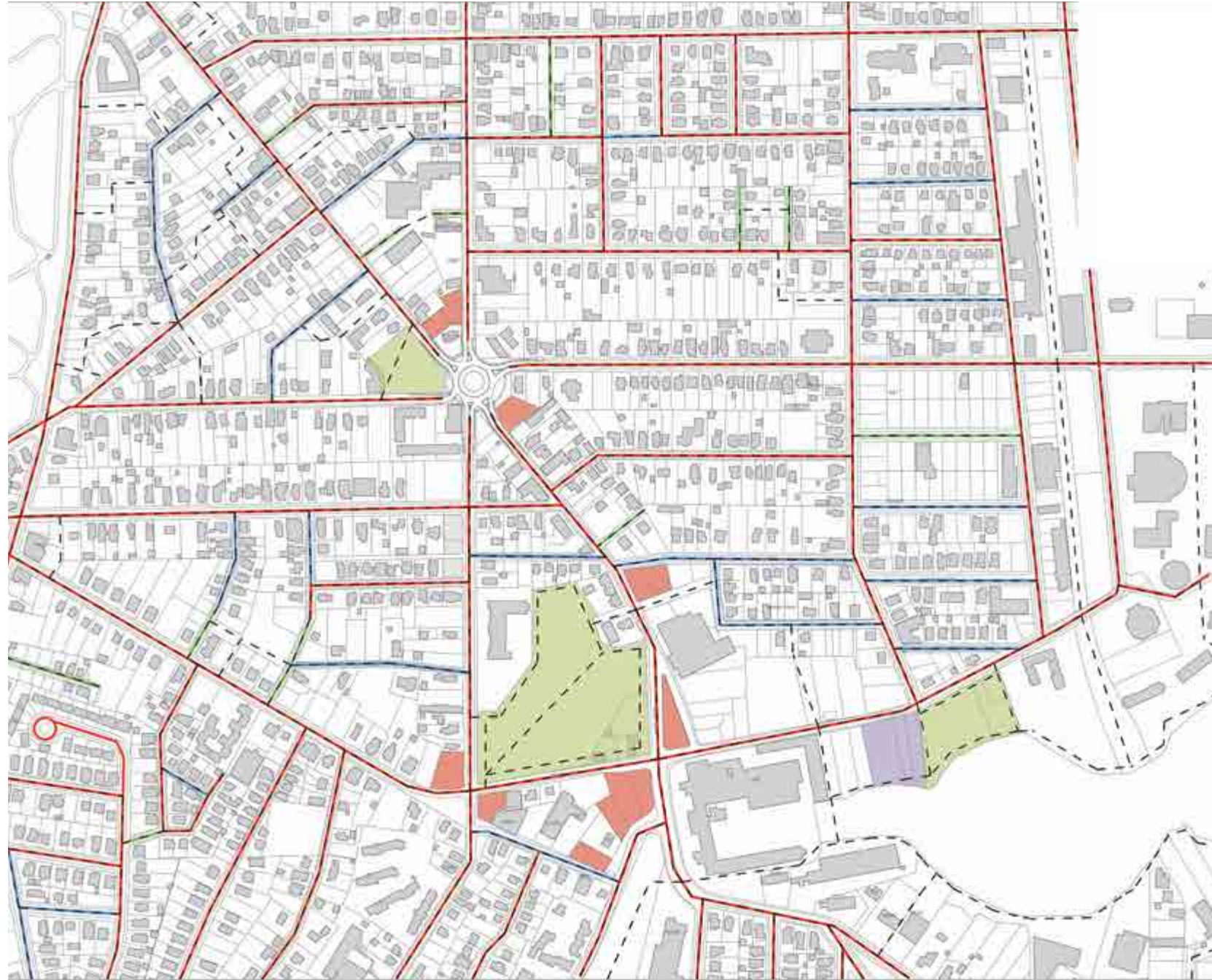
A series of rain gardens have been added to the park to extend water infiltration in the area. This will improve the water quality of Watershops Pond and the Mill River and issues with Combined Sewer Overflows.



Three terraces structure Harriet Tubman Park. The first one is level with Hickory Street, the second one contains a long, central promenade and the third is a large open green space with a deck over the water.



An outlook is located in the axis of Eastern Avenue and close to the edge of Hancock Street. A diagonal, gently sloping central promenade connects Hancock Street with Watershops Pond.

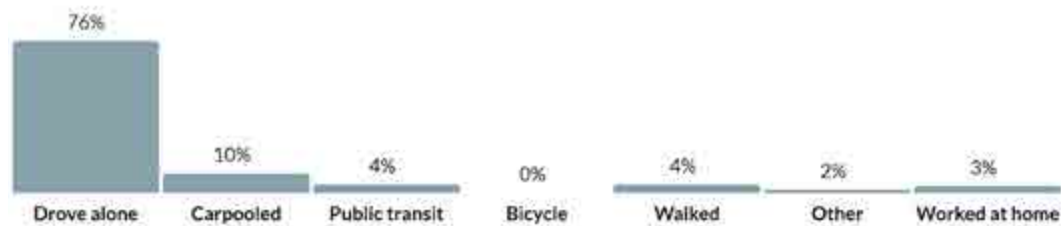


GREEN NETWORK

Ian Finn • Claudia Namaroff • Jaques Skriletz



Circulation Map



Means of Transportation to Work



Context Maps

Goal: Connect the Six Corners and Old Hill communities by increasing neighborhood interconnectivity and encouraging outdoor use through reduced traffic streets and green connections.

Needs

- Increased sense of community
- Increased public safety
- Accessible grocery store
- Space for community events
- Better use of vacant lots
- Increase in community morale

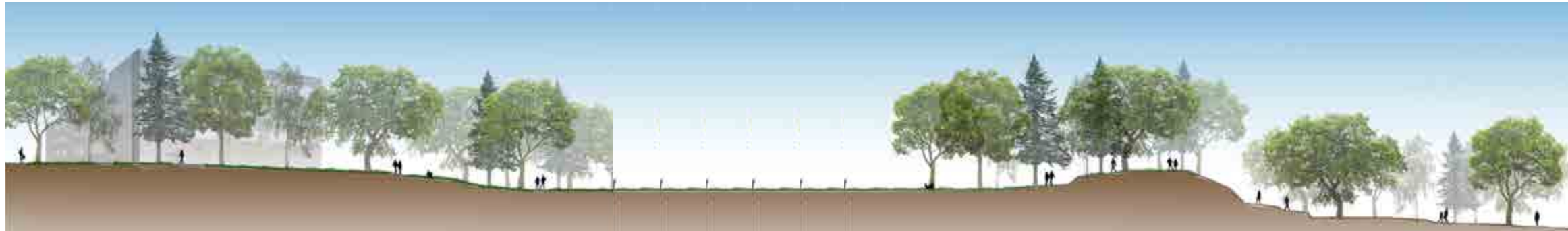
Objectives

- Increase green space and green connections
- Combat the effects of the urban heat island
- Increase healthy food accessibility
- Increase infill housing
- Increase local retail
- Increase urban tree canopy
- Re-purpose underutilized building and vacant lots
- Increase bike and walk ability
- Establish a community development center



The design of Ruth Elizabeth Park serves the neighborhood needs as well as coexisting with mixed-use housing needs at the Old Elias Brookings School. The northern section of the park will serve predominantly the new residents of the 42-unit housing project. The building will feature roof gardens and greenhouses as well as a tiled courtyard in the back. A small pathway will connect from this elevated courtyard down into the park. The property line is planted with trees and shrubs to provide privacy for the residents.

This edge also serves as a habitat for birds and other wildlife. The wooded edge continues to the south of the building to provide screening from Hancock Street and shade for the connecting pathways. The elevated topography allows for definition from the larger part of the public park and creates prospects for the residents. The southeastern corner of the park has substantial grade change and is directly on the busy crossroads of Hickory Street and Allen Street where Watershops Armory and One Stop Plaza are located.



Sectional elevation cutting perpendicular to the multi-purpose playing field facing north that shows a proposed overlook on Walnut Street and views to Watershops Pond.



Design Plan for Ruth Elizabeth Park.



Right: Perspective left: Wooded entrance from the Hickory Street to Ruth Elizabeth Park.

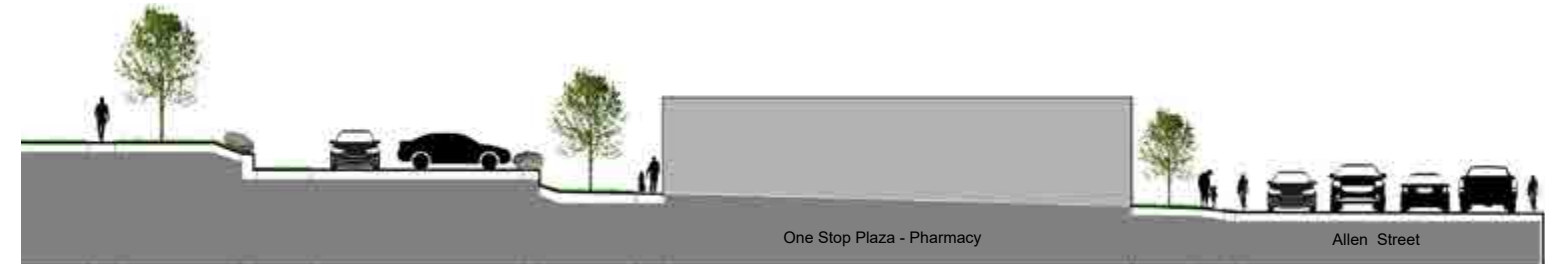


Sectional elevation that illustrates how the new wooden edge defines Ruth Elizabeth Park. This edge is permeable for views while providing valuable habitat.



Design Plan for One Stop Plaza.

The goal of the design of One Stop Plaza is to create a safe and friendly environment, re-purpose unused lots, provide clear vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian pathways, incorporate new business into the plaza to attract community members, and a boardwalk along the Mill River. A spaced alley of trees around the plaza provides a sense of safety through eyes-on-the-street while maintaining the intended aesthetic. The closing of a portion of Rifle Street allows for continuous circulation from the One Stop Plaza to the proposed boardwalk overlooking the Mill River. Vacant or underused lots on Central Street and Hancock Street become community areas and unused buildings are renovated for new uses. The new pharmacy on the corner of Allen and Hickory Streets CVS provides necessary services for the neighborhoods and Springfield College students. Proposed bicycle lanes continue throughout the area and enforce connectivity to major destinations in the surrounding areas.



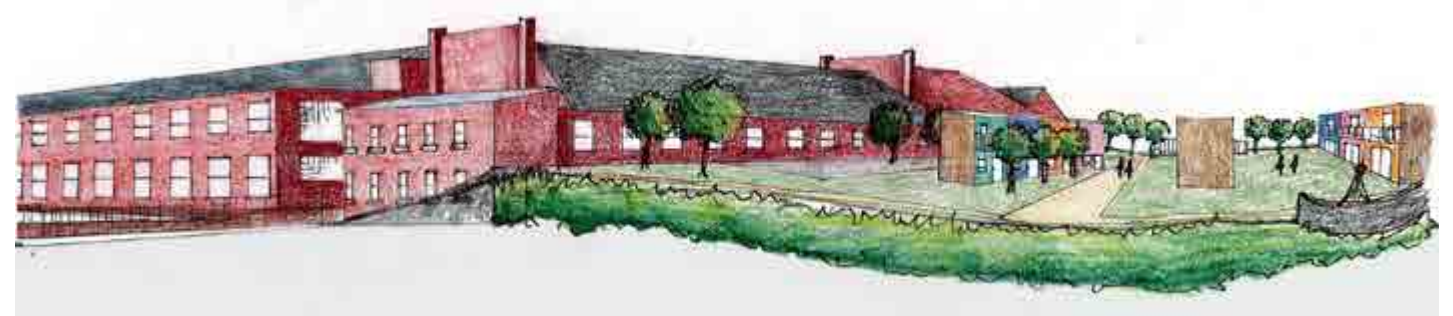
Sectional elevation facing north. Parking will be located on the upper terrace. Accessibility for pedestrians and bicyclists is accommodated from Allen Street.



Design Plan for Watershops Armory and Harriet Tubman Park.

Graduate housing and housing for young families is proposed on the lot between the Armory and Harriet Tubman Park. This location is advantageous because of the proximity to Springfield College. Springfield College is also the owner of this underused property with a great location just adjacent to the edge of Watershops Pond. A walk all along the pond will extend to the back of the Armory. There, a restaurant is proposed and invites to the

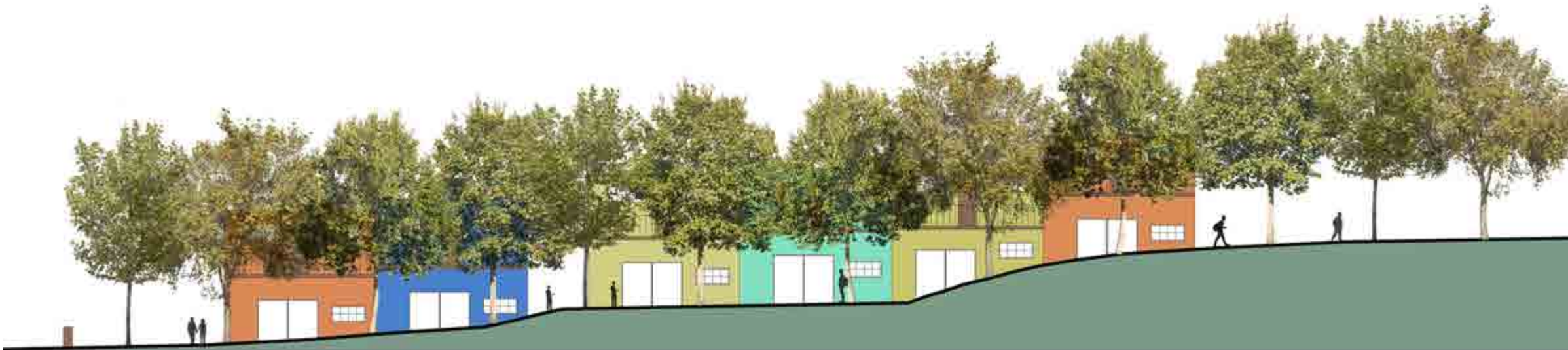
spectacular views on the Pond. From Eastern Avenue, a new entrance to Watershops Pond is proposed. Down a terraced hill, two walkways are defined by the canopy of a double alley of trees. Either walk terminates at a small dock where users can enjoy the view out to the Watershops Pond. The docks are connected with a sitting rock wall that provides another opportunity to engage with the water's edge.



Watershops Armory from Watershops Pond and the proposed Springfield College graduate housing at Harriet Tubman Park.



Sectional elevation illustrating the connection between Watershops Pond, the Armory, and the proposed graduate housing at Harriet Tubman Park.



Sectional elevation showing proposed graduate housing on Harriet Tubman Park and walk along the terraced Hill under the canopy of trees.



A view of the renovated Watershops Armory overlooking the proposed graduate housing for Springfield College.



The redesigned Armory space includes shops and a cafe to attract new customers to the area.