

SCARSDALE STRATEGIC MOBILITY + PLACEMAKING PLAN

Working Group #2 Meeting Summary

May 10, 2022, 6:00 – 7:30 p.m.

Introduction

Michael Ahillen (FHI Studio) provided an overview of the agenda and updates since the first working group meeting. The website is now live (www.scarsdalemobility.com) and the draft of the data memo is under review. He then discussed the data sources for the existing conditions, which included stakeholder engagement, previous planning documents, and traffic data. Mr. Ahillen presented on the stakeholder engagement summary and previous planning efforts. Parker Sorenson (FHI Studio) presented on the traffic data sources, which included previous traffic studies, crash history, traffic counts, and drone data collection. He showed images of the drone data collection, which displays vehicle tracks and speeds, as well as pedestrian movements in the Village Center.

Comments from the Village Board included the following:

- Parking was discussed during the Comprehensive Plan effort, and it's a high priority among residents. The consultant team will need to be mindful of what trends are happening related to parking in places similar to Scarsdale. If there are parking impacts, those should be noted.
- Recommendations need to make sure we are not just building for today. Money spent in the Village Center should be adaptable to an uncertain future.

Key Findings

Mr. Ahillen presented high level key findings, which included the following:

- Gathering spaces are a critical need to increasing vibrancy in the Village Center.
- Spencer Place, Boniface Circle, and Harwood Court offer opportunity for placemaking initiatives.
- Popham Road should be redesigned to establish better multimodal connectivity.
- Improving pedestrian and bicycle access to the Village Center is an important goal of the Village.

Comments from the Village Board included the following:

- Regarding Popham Road:
 - Neighboring communities may be impacted by any changes to Popham Road. They should be included if there are impacts.
 - The consultant team needs to define what “better” multimodal connectivity is.
 - The speeds are high on Popham Road.
 - The bridge was a major design effort that involved lane reduction and congestion.
 - Improving lighting on stairs is a need.
- Chase Park has been the center of a lot of discussion. The consultant team should consider covered spaces and play spaces for children.
- There is tremendous appeal for outdoor dining on Spencer Place. Consider ADA accessibility, outdoor heaters, and the potential for hybrid spaces.

- The high school has created planters, and the planters will arrive on May 25th.

Focus Areas

Three focus areas are recommended for further study:

- **Popham Road.** Mr. Sorenson noted lane reallocations/closures, left-turn safety and phasing at East Parkway, pedestrian crossings, aesthetics, and lighting could all be evaluated. He discussed the drone data collection indicated some opportunities considering the westbound right turn lanes at East Parkway and Depot Place are lightly used.
- **Spencer Place.** Adam Tecza (FHI Studio) noted ideas to explore, including street closures (short and long term), community gathering spaces, hybrid spaces, and curb-less streets. Mr. Sorenson shared results of the drone collection which showed the street is primarily used for parking rather than vehicle throughput.
- **Boniface Circle.** Mr. Tecza shared ideas to explore, including expanding the park space, providing flexibility for programming, and connecting to Chase Park. He shared a variety of street furniture options and examples of spaces for activation.

Next Steps

Mr. Ahillen concluded the meeting by noting next steps: finalize the data analysis memo, draft renderings, and develop Sprague Road concept plans. He said the virtual public meeting is being scheduled for June.

Comments from the public included:

- The Village Center looks different a different times of day. The early morning has commuters, then merchants open their stores, then lunchtime brings people to the tent, then shoppers come in the afternoon, then commuters return. At night, the Village Center is relatively empty. Saturday and Sunday have different patterns. The biking on the Bronx River Parkway brings hundreds of people to the park and the Village. More biking parking is needed. There is also opportunity to have musicians to further enliven the Village. Congestion is common on Popham Road in the morning.
- Congestion is common in the afternoon on Popham Road. Overhill Road has a garage opposite a parking lot that is a challenge. Traffic lights are not lined up properly at Chase Road and Popham Road intersection.
- A member of the public asked where to submit more granular comments. Greg Cutler (Village of Scarsdale) said the public can email him (gcutler@scarsdale.com) or submit through the project website (<https://www.scarsdalemobility.com/contact>).