

Land Use Summary



Marine Transfer Station



Prison Barge



Water Pollution Control Plant

OPTIMIZING LAND USE

Issues

Over the past decade, Hunts Point has witnessed a resurgence of new businesses, a revitalization of the residential housing stock, and renewed cultural activity. Despite these advances, several persistent land use issues need to be addressed. As Hunts Point positions itself for the next twenty years, setting a clear land use policy will help create a better environment for Hunts Point's future growth and vitality.

Use Conflicts

One of the priorities of the Task Force was to address the conflict between food-related uses and waste and other heavy industrial uses on the peninsula. These businesses have operational issues that can conflict with each other. Waste-related businesses tend to be truck-intensive and often result in long lines of trucks waiting to deposit the waste at commercial carting facilities. Waste uses can generate smells and rodents that are deleterious to food operations. Current zoning allows waste and food uses to exist side by side. This situation is not optimal for proper business operations, and it discourages food-related businesses from expanding and new businesses from locating in Hunts Point.

Municipal Uses on the Waterfront

At the onset of the Task Force initiative, community and business leaders identified the Department of Sanitation's (DSNY) Marine Transfer Station (MTS), Department of Corrections' (DOC) Vernon C. Bain Prison Barge and the Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) Water Pollution Control Plant as uses that were burdensome to the community and that presented hurdles to facilitating waterfront access. Community and business members of the Task Force requested that the MTS and prison barge be relocated. If relocation was not possible, the community and business members of the Task Force requested that the municipal facilities identify ways to become better neighbors to the residential and business community.

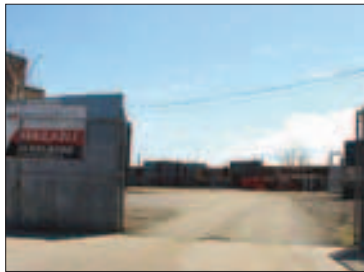
The MTS is currently closed, but during the course of the Task Force meetings DSNY was exploring reopening the MTS as part of the City's efforts to establish a City-wide solid waste plan. The location of the MTS within the Food Distribution Center was of great concern to the community and business members of the Task Force. Many members of the Task Force urged the City to make the permanent closure of the MTS a priority recommendation of the Vision Plan. In addition, the community and business members of the Task Force



Street obstruction



Foot of Farragut Street



Vacant lot



Viele Avenue



Diagram of proposed buffer area

requested that the City consider relocating the other two DSNY uses on this site—a salt pile and a community Self-Help Center—to free up this prime waterfront site for waterfront access, a ferry landing, food-related businesses and/or appropriate supporting retail.

The prison barge was opened in the early 1990s as a temporary facility and generally serves arrested persons pending an initial hearing. Since this is a critical time for arrested persons to make arrangements with family members, the facility needed to be accessible to the general public. Although it was recognized that the prison barge facility is fairly self-contained, many community representatives, businesses and elected officials believed this waterfront location was not the most appropriate for a facility that could easily have been accommodated on land.

The Task Force recognized the environmental need for the Water Pollution Control Plant and the substantial investment DEP has committed to upgrading the plant. Despite its permanency, however, there was a request for facilitating public access around the waterside of the plant with connections to the planned Barretto Point Park. Given the nature of the facility's operation and security concerns, it was recognized that continuous access would be a challenge. Another important area of concern was the ability to better monitor odors emanating from both the DEP facility and from the New York Organic Fertilizer Company (NYOFCo) sludge processing facility nearby.

Vacant and Underutilized Land

Since land in the peninsula is limited, the Task Force believes it should be utilized more fully. At present, approximately eight percent of the peninsula's industrial core (the area outside of the Market) consists of vacant land or buildings. Another five percent of the industrial area consists of parking lots, salvage yards and waste-related uses. Land in Hunts Point can be more productive as a source of economic development and jobs for the community, and it can serve as an asset rather than a drawback for existing businesses.

Violations

One of the major issues discussed at Task Force meetings was the area's problems with illegal or bad business practices such as illegal dumping, debris from trucks, business operations that flow out into the street, double parking, strong odors, poor air quality and other similar issues. Sometimes these problems stem from improper operations of businesses inside the peninsula. Hunts Point's reputation as a disorderly and isolated place, in some instances, has encouraged others to operate in a manner not in compliance with regulations.

Lack of Identity

To the extent that Hunts Point has a widely recognized identity, it is often negative. While this negative image prevails, it ignores the peninsula's unique and compelling assets, including the nation's largest food distribution center, a vibrant residential community, a thriving visual and performance arts scene and 10,000 jobs.

Short-Term Approaches

Create a Buffer Area and Promote a Balanced Land Use Policy

To address the issue of conflicts between waste-related and food-related businesses, the City is proposing to rezone an area adjacent to the Food Distribution Center and around the residential area. This "buffer area" will not permit new waste-related uses to locate there, nor will it allow existing waste facilities to expand. This will help improve the environment by raising the level of industrial performance standards and, over time, create an incentive for the more productive use of vacant and underutilized land. Mayor Bloomberg has secured New York City Industrial Development Agency funds to support the environmental review associated with the rezoning.

A benefit of the rezoning buffer is that it clearly defines land use and development opportunities on the peninsula by demarcating the area along the east and center of the peninsula for the continued growth of food-related businesses in and around the Food Distribution Center. The area along the south-west side and southwestern edge is demarked for industrial growth, and the area in the north is designated as the residential core.

In addition, DSNY recently announced its intention, as part of the draft Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan, to limit the capacity of transfer

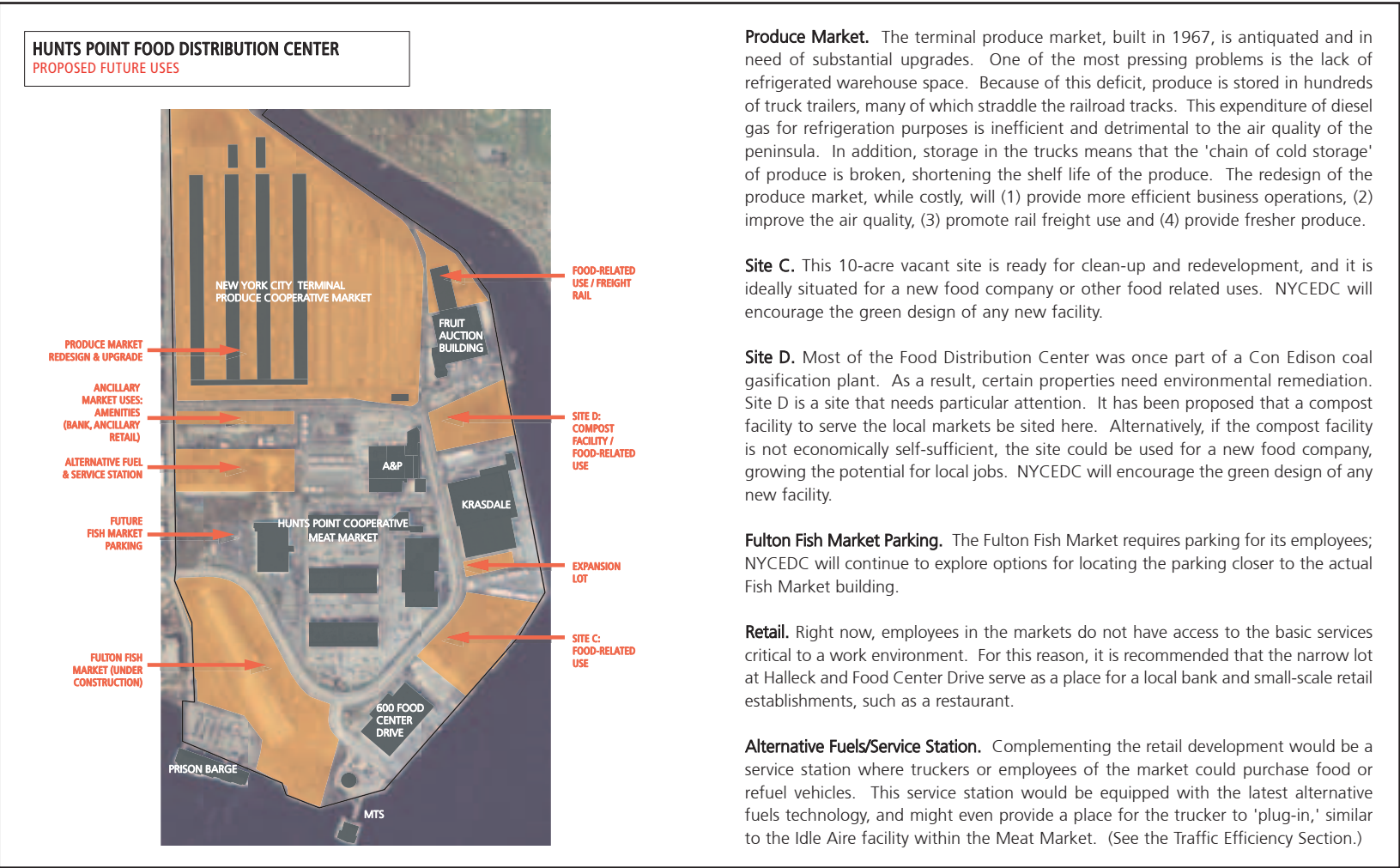
stations in Hunts Point. This new policy will allow for a more balanced distribution of transfer stations City-wide, and it will complement the Task Force's efforts to promote Hunts Point as a great place to live and to conduct business.

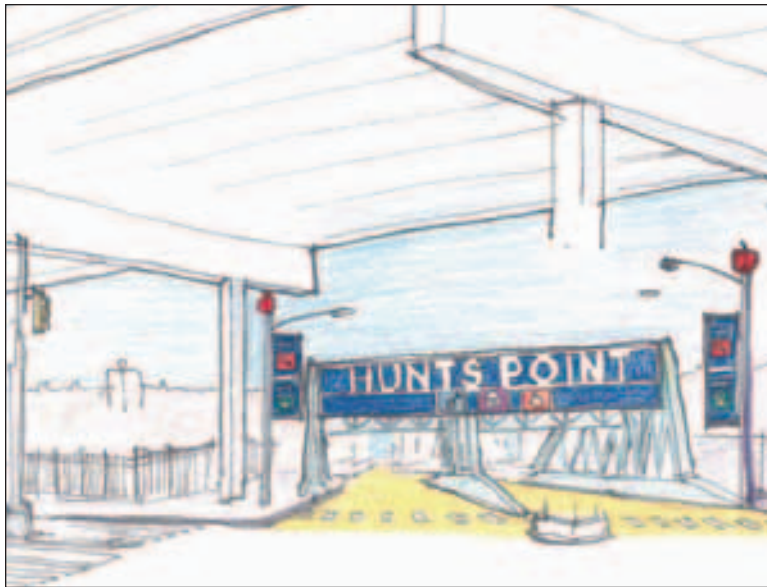
Develop the Food Distribution Center

As shown in the figure below, the Task Force identified the redevelopment goals for the Food Distribution Center. Consistent with the historic market designation, the Food Distribution Center should continue to be solely dedicated to food-related businesses and uses directly related to their success.

NYCEDC, the agency that manages the Food Distribution Center, will pursue the land use objectives outlined by the Task Force, with priority given to the redevelopment of 'Site C,' the redesign of the Produce Market and the development of an alternative fuels/service station near the corner of Halleck and Food Center Drive.

In addition to the land use objectives identified on the map, NYCEDC agreed that a 30-foot setback should be provided on the waterfront of all new developments within the Food Distribution Center, to allow room for the South Bronx Greenway and ecological restoration. An exception would be made if the lessee used the waterways to transport goods. In addition, the use of 'green' materials in new development would be encouraged, as well as other investments that decrease the use of energy and improve environmental quality.





Sketch of conceptual industrial gateway at Leggett Avenue showing potential new signage. Because maintenance of signs is critical, NYCEDC will work with NYCDOT to develop a final signage plan that promotes a positive Hunts Point identity while addressing sign standards and maintenance.

Directional sign, horizontally paired



Sign graphics, typical



Banner, typical



Directional sign, vertically stacked



Conceptual ideas for signage.

Increase Opportunities for Food-Related Businesses

By rezoning an area adjacent to the Food Distribution Center to allow for the growth of food-related businesses free from land use conflicts, the City is sending a strong signal to the food industry that it is an important part of the City's economy. The proximity of this buffer area to the markets will be beneficial to food businesses and will allow for the growth of small, medium and larger businesses. In addition, efforts are underway by the City and HPEDC to promote Hunts Point as the ideal place for locating or expanding a food-related business, including raising the awareness of the business community of the many City, State and federal benefits available to businesses locating in the Hunts Point peninsula.

Promote Redevelopment of Brownfields

To promote the productive reuse of vacant, underutilized or contaminated sites, the City will apprise community and business organizations of brownfield programs and grant opportunities, publicize financing tools that can assist in remediating contamination, and encourage participation in New York State's Brownfield Cleanup Program (BCP). The 2003 State Brownfield/Superfund Law provides generous new tax credits and improves the predictability and liability relief for those sites remediated through the BCP.

Boost Education & Enforcement

To help address environmental concerns and improve business operations, the City has prepared a brochure specifically for businesses in Hunts Point. This guidebook seeks to address common problems, such as illegal dumping, double-parking, improper signage and noise, and consists of targeted tips and cross-references to City agencies. These tips will help business owners operate in legal compliance while also imparting information on the many benefits of owning or operating a business in Hunts Point. After a reasonable time period for business owners to become fully informed of proper business operations, the City will increase enforcement. This effort will be formalized through an ongoing effort between the City and the local economic development agency as part of the City's overall industrial policy.

Promote a Positive Hunts Point Identity

DCP and NYCEDC worked with the Task Force to create a brand that would help create a positive identity for the peninsula. A first step in the development of the new identity was the creation of a unique logo that conveys various positive meanings: Hunts Point as a great place to grow your business, Hunts Point as a livable community, Hunts Point as a place to visit for arts and culture. This logo will be useful in marketing materials, but also provides a consistent positive image to be used on signs for truck routes and streetscape improvements and in the design of gateways into the peninsula. All of these projects, taken together, will help to improve the image of Hunts Point.

Municipal Uses on the Waterfront: The Water Pollution Control Plant

To address concerns with the Hunts Point Water Pollution Control Plant, DEP recently created the Hunts Point Monitoring Committee, a committee designed to provide a forum for a dialogue about the various issues of community concern relating to the plant and the NYOFCo facility.

Long-Term Approaches

Attract Food-Related Business

One of the Task Force's long-term land use objectives is to grow the food industry in Hunts Point. This will occur over time and in several stages. First, the City must rezone the buffer area to set the stage for better conditions to operate a food-related business. Next, Hunts Point should be promoted as a great place to do business. Marketing efforts should emphasize the benefits of locating food businesses in close proximity to other food businesses that attract thousands of customers every day. Finally, over time, because of the restriction of new noxious uses within the buffer area, vacant and under-utilized land should be redeveloped. To ensure the redevelopment of these sites, the City will advance policies that promote brownfield remediation. Together, these strategies will help make Hunts Point a more attractive place to do business.

Municipal Uses on the Waterfront

Decisions about the relocation of the MTS and the prison barge are dependent upon larger, City-wide municipal plans. At the time of the Task Force meetings, the results of the plans were still forthcoming. Therefore, the Task Force developed two scenarios for the MTS and prison barge. One scenario outlined recommendations if the facilities remain at their current locations; the other scenario proposes a future vision for Hunts Point without the facilities.

SCENARIO 1.

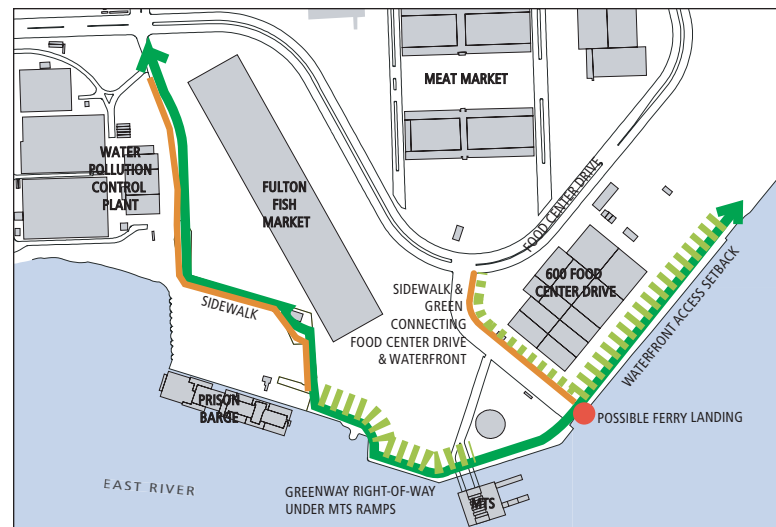
With the facilities remaining, the Task Force would like to see waterfront access and the facilitation of the South Bronx Greenway through the sites. (See also the 'Creating Connections' section of this report.)

SCENARIO 2.

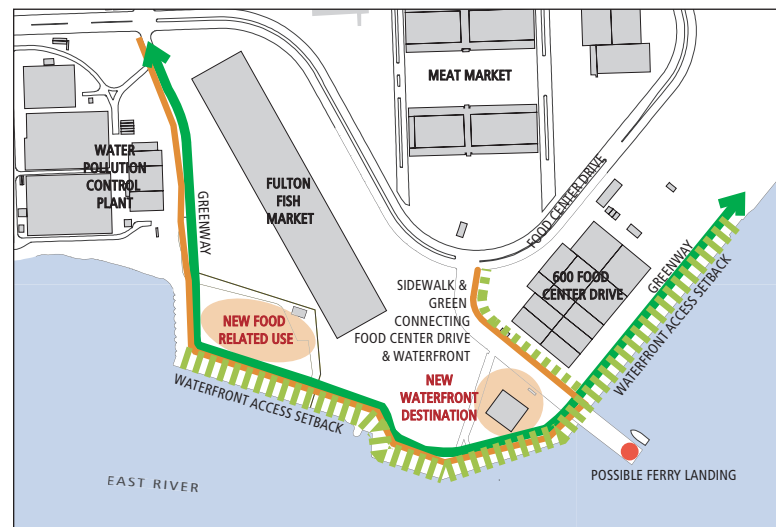
In a future without the facilities, the Task Force recommended the following:

- **Prison Barge Site.** The upland portion of the prison barge site should be re-used to complement surrounding uses. The Task Force discussed possibly converting the site to parking for the adjacent Fulton Fish Market, freeing up space elsewhere in the Food Distribution Center for more productive use. Other redevelopment options suggested by the Task Force included an eco-industrial use or additional open space. A 50-foot waterfront setback could be provided to allow waterfront access.
- **Marine Transfer Station Site.** The Task Force recommended that the MTS site be reused to leverage its waterfront location. Possible re-use options included providing a pier for docking boats, a restaurant/education center that would play off the themes of the adjacent Fish, Meat and Produce markets, and the development of a freight ferry facility to accommodate the shipment of goods by barge.

At the time of writing of this report, DSNY's draft Solid Waste Management Plan recommends the permanent closure of the MTS. Should the MTS remain closed, NYCEDC and DSNY will consider the recommendations of the Task Force and will work with the Task Force to identify a more detailed re-use plan.



Scenario showing municipal use facilities remaining



Scenario showing a future without municipal use facilities

As part of the re-use plan, the City will explore options for the relocation of the salt pile, which needs to remain in close proximity to the Bruckner Expressway.

Redevelop Oak Point Site

The Oak Point site is a 21-acre, privately owned site, currently subject to bankruptcy litigation (see page 8 for the site location). There is approximately 440,000 cubic yards of fill material on the site; it is assumed that a substantial portion of the fill is contaminated.

Once an owner of the site emerges from bankruptcy, the owner will be able to remediate and undertake development of the site. The site is currently zoned M-3, which permits a variety of industrial and commercial uses including heavy industrial uses.