

Project Area 1: Upper Castle Street

By Alex Abel, Christina Biasiucci, Nathan Weiss

For our ARCH/ENV 351: Sustainable Community Development Method & Tools we were to come up with a proposal for a section in downtown Geneva to revitalize the area, and in doing so make an effort to make our solutions as sustainable as possible. Our project area covered 106 to 164 Castle Street as well as 89- 93 Linden Street in downtown Geneva. This portion of Castle Street contains various businesses such as a Chinese restaurant, yoga studio, barber shop, and real estate store. There is also architectural history embedded in downtown Geneva, as for example the Dilman building. Along with all these great businesses present in our section, there are also several vacant apartments and storefronts, as well as an underused parking lot.

The current issue we would like to address in our section is that it is underutilized. By working with the steering committee of local property owners, and city officials, we developed a plan to renovate, invigorate and, update our block. This will be done by improving the streetscape while keeping sustainability in mind.

Our plan included design proposals and environmentally friendly, cost effective and socially conscious improvements. The goal is to increase the area's appeal to locals, students and tourists aesthetically so that we can draw in more of a social outdoor atmosphere, bring in more business and build community.

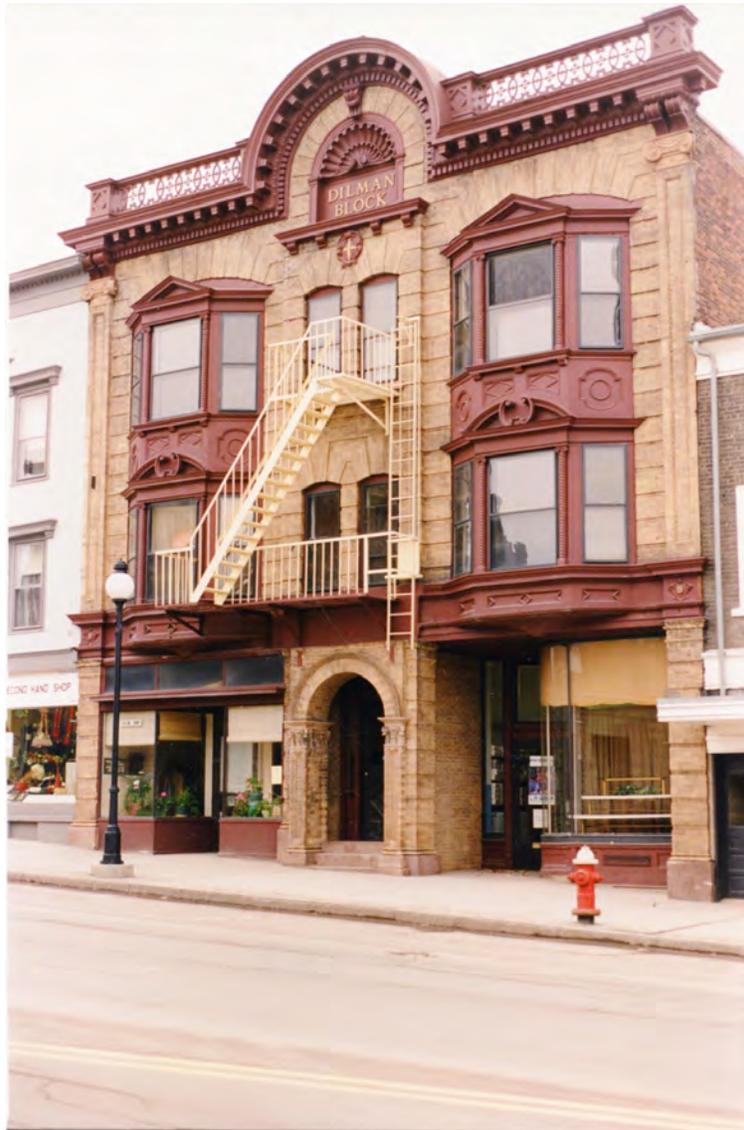
We proposed a short and long term plans that each included two main categories: streetscape and façade improvements. Our short term plan recommends the addition of benches, bicycle racks, and hanging plants to improve the streetscape for our project area. It also recommends the installation of awnings as a façade improvement. Additionally, the awnings while making the storefront more appealing, will save energy costs at the same time.

With the short term suggestions completed, we tackled the long term issues next. To solve the vacant storefronts issue we proposed to fill them with businesses such as bakeries, ice cream parlors and possibly even a foreign foods store.

Additionally, our long term proposal includes parklets in order to improve the outdoor atmosphere in this area. We also think that turning part of the Rite Aid parking lot into a miniature park, will increase the visual appeal in this section of downtown Geneva. Also, we would like to suggest CO2 cleanings for the facades of the buildings.

A final sustainable suggestion we proposed was the installation of double pane argon gas windows. After doing calculations we realized that installing these windows will save

energy and reduce heating and cooling costs. Savings can be seen even when installing just one of these windows. Payback for this type of window installation is around 6 years.



The architectural beauty is captured in this photo of the Dilman building taken in the early 90s.



This building has been affected by time and needs to be revitalized to its former glory which can be achieved through CO₂ cleaning.

Sustainable Community Development

Spring 2013

Daniel Budmen, Ana Garcia, Drew King, Colby Mauke

Overview:

This project for ARCH/ENV 351: Sustainable Community Development Methods & Tools regards the block in downtown Geneva, defined by Main Street, Castle Street, Linden Street, and Seneca Street. By utilizing two students from the Architectural Studies department, and two students from the Environmental Sciences department, our team has been taking steps towards designing a more sustainable, and efficient block in downtown Geneva. The team started through researching the downtown area, this allowed for an understanding of the historical and social competence. From there, we took our newly found knowledge of the area and applied it to make short and long term goals regarding the sustainability of downtown. Recently our team has been presenting these goals to both GNRC and The Finger Lakes Institute, in hope of taking these ideas and turning them into reality.

Demographics and Users:

This area of downtown is frequented by a diverse array of people. The restaurants offer a wide-range of cuisine options making the area desirable to visit from the surrounding communities. The shops are unique drawing any passerby's attention and making the area idiosyncratic. The combination of the local amenities draws students from Hobart and William Colleges to the local cafes, restaurants and bars on the weekends. It is a great collaboration space for the Geneva and HWS communities.

About Us:

Daniel Budmen '15: a double major in Geoscience and Public Policy with a minor in Environmental Studies, Daniel strives to become an Environmental Lawyer. Recently, he has been awarded a grant to make a greenhouse, which will house a tree nursery, at the Geneva Community Center.

Ana Garcia '14: a double major in Architecture and Latin American Studies with a minor in Studio Art, Ana is interested in community development design. She hopes to one day help design and implement urban development projects that will bring sustainability into disadvantaged communities.

Andrew King '14: a major in Architectural Studies and minor in Geoscience, Drew won ThePitch entrepreneurial competition, and continues to peruse his entrepreneurial endeavors. He hopes to work in the field of landscape architecture and sustainable design.

Colby Mauke '13: a double major in Architecture and Studio Art with a minor in Art History, Colby recently received the Senior Architecture award and hopes to one day have his own sustainable furniture design company.



Sustainability Plan:

The block in downtown Geneva, that is defined by Main Street, Castle Street, Linden Street, and Seneca Street has great potential to become an environmentally friendly community space. Our team envisions making tax lot 305, the former Gas Station lot, a amphitheater that could serve as a place for concerts, wine tastings, or community lectures. In addition to the amphitheater, we envision the amphitheater that looks out on to a pergola which we serve as covered parking, as well as, a place to grow ivy on top of – making the area aesthetically pleasing. Next, a LED lit path that will lead from the alleyway on the eastern side of the Smith Opera Center to Castle Street will be constructed to encourage consumer activity throughout all of downtown Geneva. The path will be lined with old wine barrels and apple crates filled with plants to make the area inviting. This path will create a space for street vendors to sell their products, as well as, a place for the local restaurants to offer an “al fresco” option. Lastly, our team envisions a focus on rear entrance revitalization. The picture above shows an example of what we envision a rear entrance revitalization project would look like for the building on tax lot 87 on Linden Street. We believe these details would make the currently under-utilized area an inviting community space; enhancing collaboration and community development.



HOBART AND WILLIAM SMITH COLLEGES



Project Area 3: A New View of Geneva from 5&20

By Elva Ye, Katherine Hill, Chris Greenwood, Duncan Fox

Our project area, located on the east side of both Exchange and Castle Street, represents an immense opportunity to draw positive commercial and residential interest to the downtown area. A number of the historical buildings on the block boast unique architectural features as centerpieces of the area. The project area also features a railway running through the east side, lined with trees in a variety of growth stages, to distract from the deteriorating appearance of the rear facades.

Currently the area offers retail space to local small businesses and local entertainment. There are plans for a nano-brewery as well as a scotch and tea bar, in addition to the currently operating facilities. The rear functions as an underutilized parking lot for business owners, but its' use is limited by lack of access or direction to the space. Additionally, the current restaurants do very well with student, tourist, and local activity, but they lack connectivity.

One of the main issues of the areas is that it is a perfect example of a concrete jungle. The area lacks greenery and has very few examples of sustainable efforts, aside from individual efforts to use sustainable fixtures and appliances.

Aside from the concrete jungle effect, about 30% of the buildings in the project area are deteriorating, and the area has a 75% vacancy rate on the upper floors of the area. Because of the unpleasant appearance of rear facades of the buildings on Exchange St., the city decided to plant numerous trees along 5&20 behind the project area. Though presumably unintended, these trees resulted in the obstruction of views from the residences and visually create a dichotomy between downtown from the lakefront. Finally, the parking lot behind Exchange Street is entirely underutilized.

These factors, equate to both serious obstacles and a proliferation of opportunities. By removing the trees that block the view of downtown from 5&20, tourists of the lake, locals who frequent the lake, and commuters through Geneva would also recognize the downtown as a point of interest and focal point. Additionally, there are many opportunities associated with the under-utilized parking lot behind Exchange Street that can be taken advantage of. Repaving the lot would both clean-up the appearance of the lot and bring new users who had not previously recognized the space as

To address the issues previously highlighted, there are a number of viable proposals for both short and long term interventions in the area. First, by closing off East Castle Street, parklets could be installed to draw attention from the

downtown area to the industry along the south side of East Castle Street. Additionally, by redoing the rear parking lot with permeable pavement and grass, the trees covering the view between the unsightly rear facades and the highway could be replaced with more sparse and aesthetically pleasing trees. The renovation of the parking lot would include the construction of a bike path to connect the parking lot to Castle Street for pedestrians and bicyclists. Finally, the proposal includes repainting the rear facades of buildings in the project area, and implementing green roofs on the lower roofs of Exchange Street to embellish the appearance of the facades and offer a sustainable alternative to the current roofs.

Among all the proposed interventions, this designated area of downtown could be revitalized and act as a focal point for people passing through downtown or traveling on 5&20. Between renovations, filled vacancies due to new economic growth in the area, and added greenery, this part of Geneva will thrive and bring a new life to downtown.



Proposed Parklet on East Castle Street

Project Area 4: Turning around a forgotten area

By Bo Lambert, Sheamus O'Sullivan, Joellen Mauch and Jamal Combs

Today marks a step in a series of moves forward in Geneva's efforts toward sustainability. Over the past few years, the city has invested an increasing amount of time and money in revitalizing the built environment of downtown. They have also worked to set forth strategies for future economic development so that the business and shops can flourish in the local economy.

Four students from the Sustainable Community Development Tools and Method course at Hobart and William Smith Colleges act as advocates for sustainable community development in Geneva. Bo Lambert, Sheamus O'Sullivan, Joellen Mauch and Jamal Combs have adopted social, economic, and environmental consciousness practices that they applied to develop short- and long-term design interventions to enhance the environmental quality and community well being in their area of downtown Geneva: along South Exchange Street and Franklin Street.

After talking to local shop owners and citizens, the students investigated the downtown's history, demographics, and current sustainable practices to help them to understand what design interventions would be most beneficial their site. Because of the high rate of vacancy in the area, the students focused their efforts on increasing connectivity between their site and the rest of downtown and creating a more inviting area for visitors to encourage them to spend more time on the street and at its businesses. From these goals they established five potential opportunities for the short- and long-term design interventions: the streetscape, building facades, open lot space, parking lots, and the soon to be vacated bank lot.

Following complaints about the unsafe and uninviting streetscape, the team chose two interventions for the short term to increase the safety and invitingness of the street. They proposed to implement spot-light lit trees along the widened sidewalk and a widened sidewalk along the east side of South Exchange Street. In the long-term, the team proposed the implementation of medians on South Exchange to eliminate street side parking, slow traffic on the street, increase night-time lighting, and allow for safer crossing opportunities for pedestrians. To help promote sustainable transportation, some bike racks will be placed along the sidewalk to replace the eliminated parking spots.

To increase visibility of the businesses that are along South Exchange, the short-term proposal focuses on increasing visible connectivity of façade coloring by repainting the outsides of the buildings to be more congruent with the rest of the downtown's facades.

As a long-term intervention, the team proposed implementing green facades to the walls visible from Route 5 & 20; a competition will be used to allow locals to create graphic designs for these facades. Along with increasing the attractiveness of the buildings, the facades are used to increase the thermal efficiency of the buildings.

In the large open lot in their site, the team proposed a public amphitheater to promote local artists, while allowing viewers to have an unobstructed view of the lake and the proposed solar garden that will power the amphitheater. To further increase connectivity, the amphitheater area will include signage for how individuals can travel to the lakefront via the tunnel under Route 5 & 20. The amphitheater will be designed to host all kinds of visual arts including music, dance, and theater performances for all ages.



Street view from corner of South Exchange and Seneca Street with road medians.

Project Area 5: Plans for a New Park and Access to the Lake **By Loren Marshall, Audrey Li, Dixin Bao and Hannah Brunelle**

In collaboration with Hobart and William Smith Colleges and the Geneva Neighborhood Resource Center, Loren Marshall, Audrey Li, Dixin Bao and Hannah Brunelle within the Architecture and Environmental Studies departments at Hobart and William Smith Colleges have developed a plan for the land that extends from South Main St. towards the waterfront. Under the direction of a steering committee comprised of local residents and business owners, the students have spent the semester collecting research and developing a site plan. Moving forward to the end of the semester the students will be presenting their final design plans to various interest groups in the community and at the Colleges.

The specific site extends down the hillside from South Main St., past the Geneva Recreational Complex and ends on the north side of Routes 5&20. The east barrier for this site is along Elizabeth Blackwell St. and the west edge ends at the slope from South Main St. and the slope 5&20, creating a valley effect for the site as a whole. Beginning in the early stages of their research, the students collected information and feedback from employees who work at the on site, took copious site notes and documented building structure and ground conditions with sketches and photographs.

The students report that there are a total of four buildings on the site. None are in need of immediate repairs and they are in structurally sound condition. However, there have been issues noted in regards to adaptability to integrate better sustainability systems and decrease the ecological footprint of the buildings in the greater downtown community. Overall, the buildings take up only 30% of the site land. The rest of the site is open space. The HWS students ascertained that this land is "underutilized" and consider it an inhospitable environment for most user groups.

"The majority of the ground cover is taken up by parking lots and other impermeable surfaces. Therefore, the present setup favors vehicles over pedestrians. This issue is further intensified by the railroad tracks that run West to East through the center of the site. It is difficult to move easily from place to place." Described by Hannah Brunelle.

There is much room for improvement and the group is strived to increase walkability, accessibility and connectivity. The interventions are mostly concerned with the spaces in between the buildings to incorporate a more efficient network of pathways and engage with the community on a more playful level.

As a part of their final design phase, the students have planned to focus on the landscape of the site. The structural improvements include seating, park space, and community gathering space.

"Our design was motivated by creating 'moments'. We hope to move people but also give them areas to linger and to gather." Described by Loren Marshall.

The students are excited to use the Colleges' Day of Service program in addition to local school groups in the clean up and preliminary design phases. They plan on pulling from statewide grants

and relying on the volunteer work of active citizens to help make the site a success for all.

In summary, their design will create the most opportune public access point to the lakefront and its park. The students are excited to see their designs implemented and the positive effects they predict it to have on the community. Their efforts should be an aesthetic, programmatic, environmental and practical win for residents, businesses and visitors. Their site hasn't been significantly renovated in years and it is about time for changes to be made.

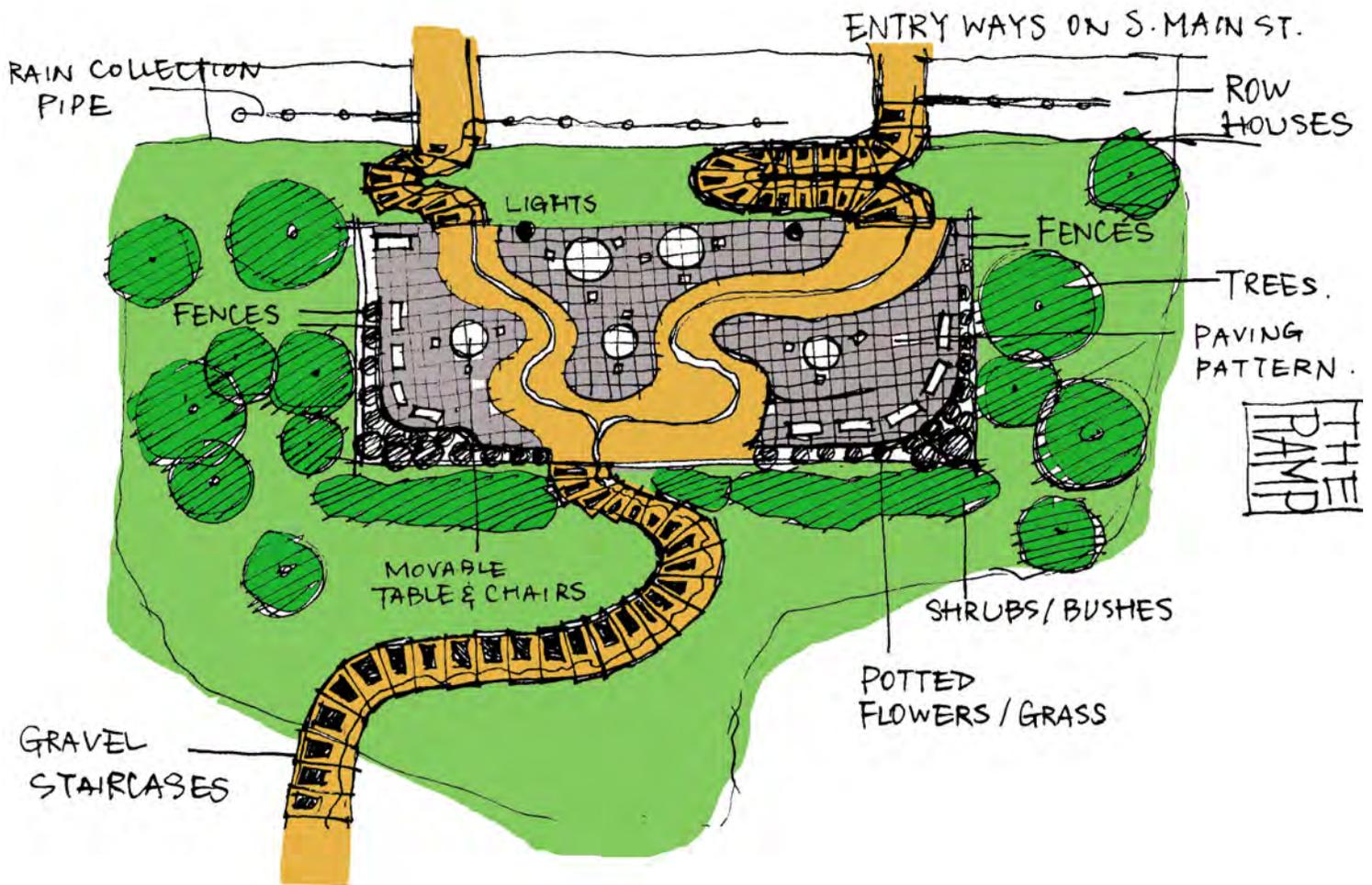


Figure 1: Sketch of the Team's idea for the North end of the site.



Figure 2: Standing on Elizabeth Blackwell St. looking onto the West side of the site.



Figure 3: Standing at the Geneva Recreational Complex, showing the entrance to the site.



Figure 4: The Students have identified the highway of 5&20 as a major inhibitor for the connections on their site. This was taken standing from the overpass on South Main St.