NYMTC Brown Bag Lunch
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Water Street: A New Approach

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Why Water Street?
Density of user groups
Why Water Street?

Strengths

- Improved East River Waterfront
- Bookended by Seaport and Battery Park
- Part of the dense commercial core
- Proximate to historic Stone Street
Why Water Street?

Weaknesses

Overly wide street lacking amenities

Underutilized public space

Feels disconnected and outdated

Inconsistent pedestrian experience
Water Street Ad Hoc Committee

This study was commissioned by
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Study goal

Create an identity for Water Street that will infuse activity and steward public and private reinvestment in the corridor.
Water Street Study process

**PHASE I**
May - July 2009

- Research & Analysis
  - Researched existing data and studies
  - Assembled base plans
  - Conducted relevant precedents
  - Interviewed key Water Street stakeholders
  - Analyzed opportunities & constraints
  - Presented research, opportunities, & goals

**PHASE II**
Aug - Dec 2009

- Vision Strategy Development
  - Conducted four thematic workshops in Programming, Economics, Transportation, and Design
  - Developed vision plan
  - Rendered site & streetscape plans
  - Created component summary

**PHASE III**
Dec - Feb 2010

- Implementation Strategy
  - Created implementation strategy
  - Presented vision to city agencies
  - Remaining:
    - Provide final plan report
Water Street Study process

Significant agency and stakeholder input in workshops and project briefings, including:

- Department of Transportation
- Department of City Planning
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Economic Development Corporation
- Manhattan Borough President’s Office
4 Principles

**Anchor to Anchor:** Rescale the street to create an iconic boulevard.

**Water to Water:** Strengthen connections to the historic core and waterfront.

**Space to Place:** Realign public and ground floor spaces to encourage street life.

**Day to Night:** Extend the hours of activity along Water Street.
Anchor to Anchor: Rescale the street

1. Maintain appropriate traffic flow and prioritize commercial curb access.

2. Create gateways at the street’s northern and southern limits.

3. Create a pedestrian-oriented environment and facilitate north-south movement.

4. Reinforce connections to adjacent transportation nodes.
Traffic volumes

Vehicle Volumes
- 900 cars per AM rush hour
- 300 cars per AM rush hour
- 900 cars per PM rush hour
- 300 cars per PM rush hour
Neighborhood character
Street reconfiguration

Existing Condition

Median and Amenity Strip
Street reconfiguration

Existing section
Street reconfiguration

Proposed section
Water Street today

Existing configuration view at Old Slip
Water Street tomorrow

Proposed configuration view at Old Slip
Water Street tomorrow

Proposed configuration view at Old Slip

- Sidewalk neck downs at intersection
- Continuous street trees
- Landscaped median with public art
- 14' moving lane and left turn-bay
Precedent: Via Veneto, Italy
Landscape patterns

West side:
- 10’ Soil zone
- 10’ Sidewalk

East side:
- 5’ Soil zone
- 10’ Sidewalk

- Cafe Seating
- Benches
- Bike Racks
- Bus Shelter
- Kiosk
Water Street today

Existing sidewalk view North between Fletcher and John Streets
Water Street tomorrow

Proposed Western sidewalk view North between Fletcher and John Streets
Water Street tomorrow

Proposed Western sidewalk view North between Fletcher and John Streets

- Infill arcades for retail
- Amenity strip/Sidewalk extension
- Clustered trees and landscape
- Cafe sidewalk seating and free public WiFi

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Water and Whitehall
Intersection at Whitehall Street, 2009
Water and Whitehall

Proposed plaza at Whitehall Street
Water and Whitehall

Proposed plaza at Whitehall Street

- New public plaza at Whitehall
- Landscaped median with public art
- Pedestrian refuge and improved crossings
- Street trees through Million Trees NYC program
1. Create a physical and programmatic link between Water Street and the East River Esplanade.

2. Improve sightlines between historic slips and the East River.

3. Expand central open space to create an active, programmable destination.

4. Integrate sustainable design into site improvements.

Water to Water: Create great public spaces that connect to the waterfront
Commuter activity
Conceptual cross street strategy
Public space network connections

South Street and East River Esplanade
Water Street today

Mannahatta Park existing
Water Street tomorrow

Mannahatta Park destination: passive weekday use
Water Street tomorrow

Mannahatta Park destination: passive weekday use

- Greenmarket and concessions
- Front Street remains open to traffic
- More trees planted along Wall Street
- Paving, trees and signage all indicating pedestrian environment
- Cafes and outdoor seating activate plaza in good weather
Water Street tomorrow

Mannahatta Park destination: active weekend use
Water Street tomorrow

Mannahatta Park destination: active weekend use

In ground fountains used seasonally and for community events

Visual line of elements leads visitors toward the waterfront and esplanade
1. Modify zoning regulations to facilitate re-design and infill of POPS and arcades.

2. Reconfigure ground floor spaces to enable new uses.

3. Entice retail uses that target workers and extend to residents and tourists.

4. Accelerate transformation by incentivizing capital reinvestment.
Space to Place: Attract retail and incentivize investment

POPS, arcade, and parks strategy

1. Infill arcades and POPS with retail to:
   • eliminate dead space
   • provide greater streetfront activity

2. Preserve and enhance POPS and parks to:
   • reinforce east-west connections
   • activate with programming
Water Street today

80 Pine Street
Water Street tomorrow

80 Pine Street
Reconfiguration of ground-floor spaces
Exploring minimum to maximum approaches

Illustration of varied configurations for 1 New York Plaza (left) and 75 Wall Street (right)
Water Street today

75 Wall Street
Water Street tomorrow

75 Wall Street
Water Street today
One New York Plaza
Water Street tomorrow
One New York Plaza
1. Program open spaces with regular and seasonal events and public art.

2. Illuminate pedestrian space and building facades.

3. Provide publicly accessible WiFi and other information technology.
Lighting strategy
Lighting strategy
Arts and programming
Water Street tomorrow
Potential timeline for implementation

2010
- Re-strip roadway with temporary materials
- Replace trees where needed
- Install pilot plaza at Whitehall St
- Provide info kiosk at gateways
- Enhance signage and wayfinding
- Close Front Street for lunch time programming
- Test street closures at Wall Street
- Amend zoning regulations and standardize design review
- Schedule events and installations
- Install Wifi and smart street services

2015
- De-map southbound lane at Whitehall and start design of Water Street Reconstruction
- Complete comprehensive design for Mannahatta Park
- Attract and incentivize new retail
- Encourage capital investment in POPS/Arcades
- Develop and install curated art and events program
- Install east-west reflector lights
- Relocate obstructions to allow continuous soil beds and plant street trees
- Reconstruct Mannahatta Park
- Continue capital investment in POPS/Arcades
- Install Alliance light poles on east side of street and landscape lighting where possible

2020
- Construct permanent landscaped median
- Construct sidewalk extension on west side
- Install neckdowns
- Complete lighting installation
Water and Whitehall

DOT temporary pedestrian plaza at Whitehall Street
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Further information including a link to download the whole report:
www.downtownny.com/waterstreet

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