



## **Glen Cove: Downtown Gateway to the Waterfront Phase II land Use Report**

April 10, 2013

### **Downtown Gateway Land Use Introduction**

The examination and analysis of land use within downtown Glen Cove, including the understanding of connectivity issues between downtown and the proposed new waterfront development, has been done through the lens of the market, consumer, and retail study. The following questions have surfaced during the course of the analysis:

- What are the land use issues that support an active and healthy downtown – healthy both economically and socially – and what are the issues to be overcome?
- How can land use be understood in its relationship to the new proposed development along the waterfront and how can a market balance be achieved between the two?
- What will facilitate movement, both pedestrian and vehicular, between the two?
- What has to be programmed along the path of connection, to support movement, repose, and activity?
- What are the assets and how can the uniqueness of Glen Cove be supported through physical interventions so that the Glen Cove ‘downtown’ can become more of a destination for residents as well as attracting outsiders?
- Are their zoning or urban design standards that need to be adopted to support the downtown revitalization efforts?

### **Downtown Gateway Study Area**

Downtown Glen Cove is comprised of a diversity of land uses. Within the downtown study area there are businesses, government offices, institutional uses (including health care, senior services and library), retail, dining, parks, municipal parking, and residential occupancies. Commercial zoning overlays the bulk of the land within the study area with institutional/government uses also accounting for a significant portion of the land use. In addition, there are three residential neighborhoods that abut the study area.

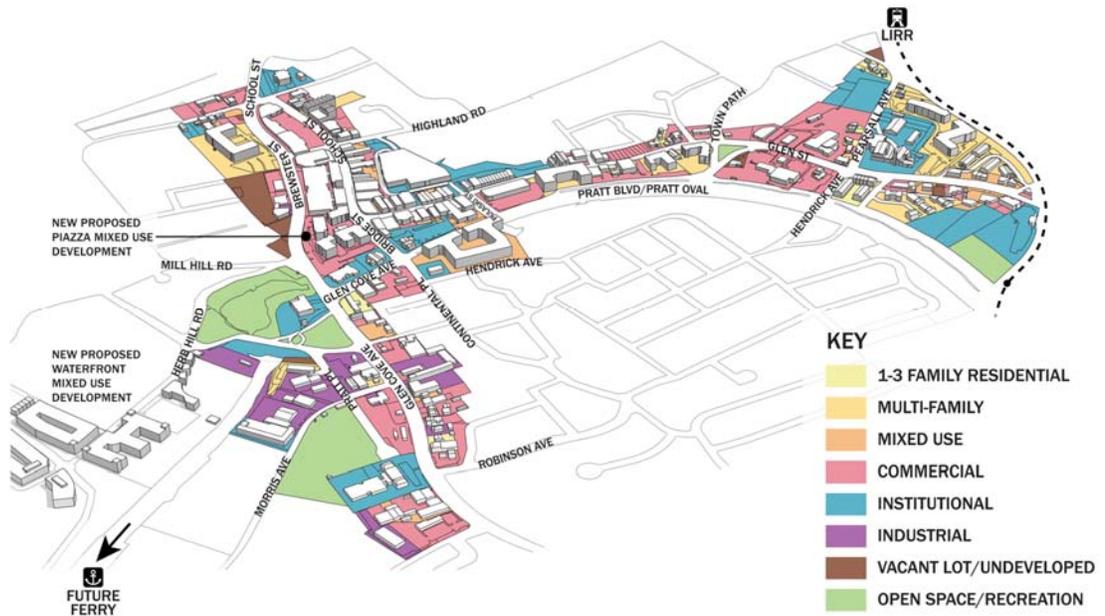


Figure I – Physical Conditions: Land Use

The downtown is also serviced by public transportation, the Glen Street LIRR station, a branch line that connects Oyster Bay to the mainline at Mineola; the #27 bus that travels along Glen Street and connects to Hempstead; and the #21 bus that travels along Glen Cove Avenue and connects to Roslyn.

The downtown study area presents itself as several different physical components with Glen Street as its spine:

1. The LIRR Station (Glen St.) to the Town Path
2. Town Path to Pulaski Street
3. Pulaski Street to School Street
4. The length of School Street from Glen Cove Avenue to its intersection with Forest/Brewster Street

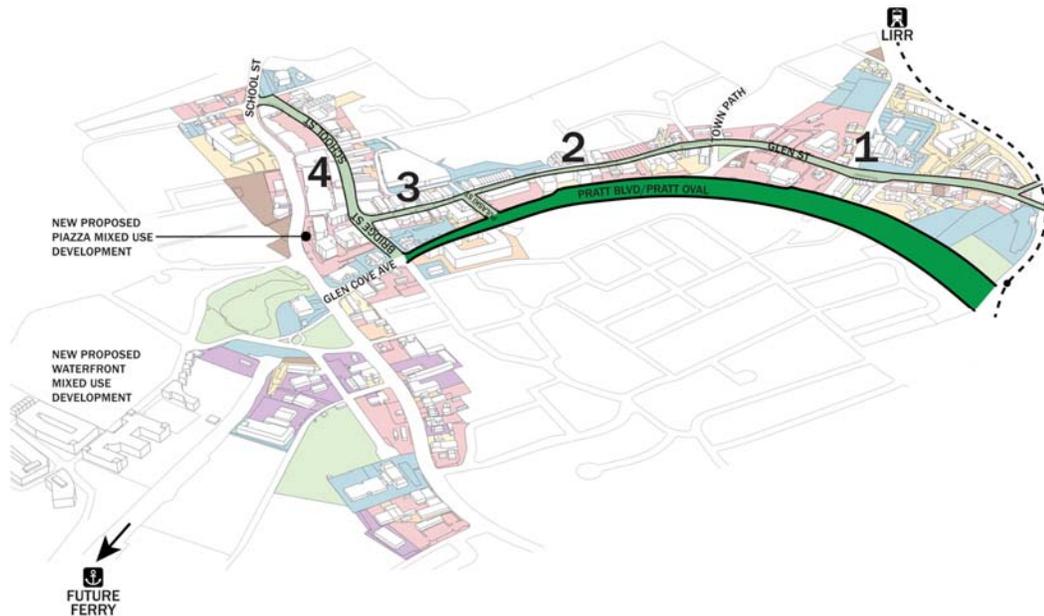


Figure 2 - Circulation Spine

The visual center of downtown is the plaza on the east side of School St. at its intersection with Glen St. This intersection is also the activity hub of downtown particularly during ‘festival’ times (such as the annual summer concert series). The commercial buildings located here are vacant. This space will become downtown Glen Cove’s most significant development project - The Piazza @ Glen Cove. This mixed-use project features ground level commercial space, 142 rental apartment units, a 107-car underground garage, and a 12,000 sq. ft. decorative brick public plaza.

Free parking is readily available with parking structures located on either side of School Street (with one of the garages providing access to Glen St. as well) easily accessible via pedestrian alleyways to downtown shops and businesses.

## Regional Streets/Local Streets

Pratt Boulevard, Brewster Street, and Glen Cove Avenue are wide, fast moving streets providing connections to and from downtown to surrounding communities. These streets are for automotive movement and convenience. Brewster Street, which bypasses downtown, connecting Forest Avenue with Glen Cove Avenue, due to the lack of safe pedestrian crossings, forms a barrier to movement in connecting downtown with Pratt Park as well as the new proposed waterfront development.

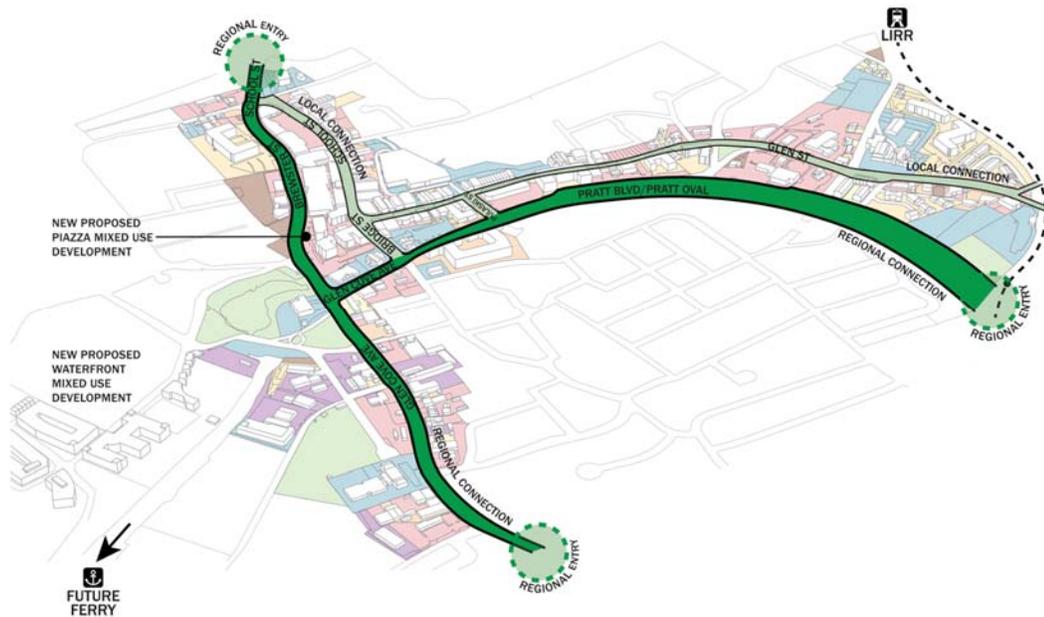


Figure 3 – Physical Conditions: Regional & Local Connections

Glen Street and School Street, the 'Main Street' of downtown Glen Cove, are narrower, slower streets with building frontages forming a coherent street-wall and distinctive sidewalks with trees. This visual delineation of Glen Street begins to fray as you walk east of Pulaski Street. Building walls, storefronts and entrances give way to parking lots with buildings set back behind them. As you walk past Town Path towards the LIRR station, Glen Street completes its transition from a comfortable pedestrian environment to one in which automobile movement and convenience clearly dominate and influence the form of the streetscape.

## Downtown Gateway Land Use and Connectivity Issues

Although downtown Glen Cove has a diversified mix of uses (retail, dining, business, institutional, government, residential) and is surrounded by three distinct residential neighborhoods there is a significant reduction of use after 5:00 PM.

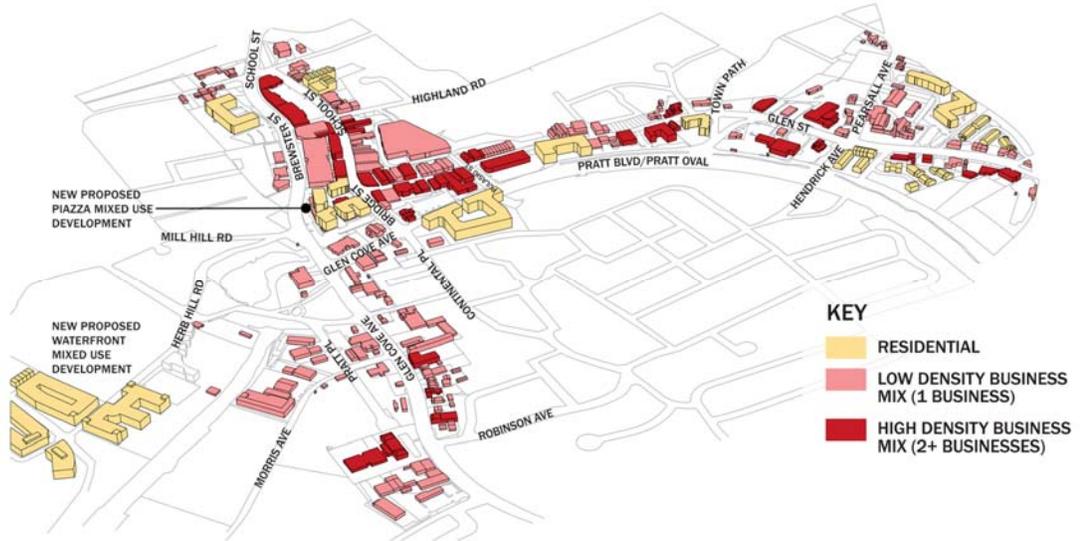


Figure 4 – Density: Daytime

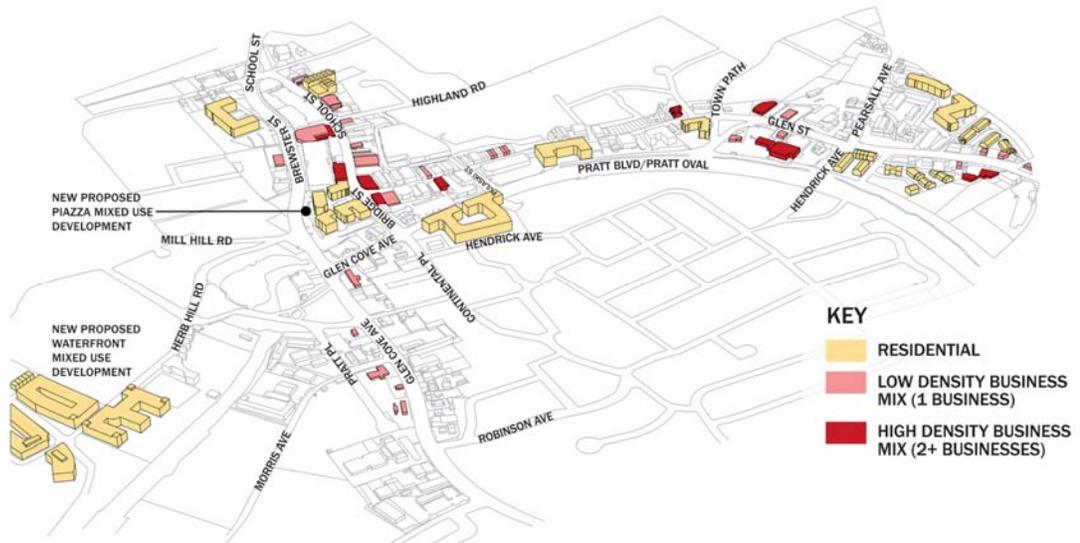


Figure 5 – Density: Evening

## Density of Activity

- Increase retail, dining, and entertainment diversity to broaden downtown use from late afternoon hours through the evening hours.

Downtown use peaks during the business and drops off considerably after 5:00 PM. As per the consumer survey and marketing study, there needs to be a greater diversity in what downtown has to offer in order to become a more frequented destination for the existing assets (i.e. dining) and needs to expand to entertainment and other venues of choice that will separate and make distinctive Glen Cove from its surrounding market areas. This is important, both for the health of downtown, but also to establish a balance with the proposed new developments.

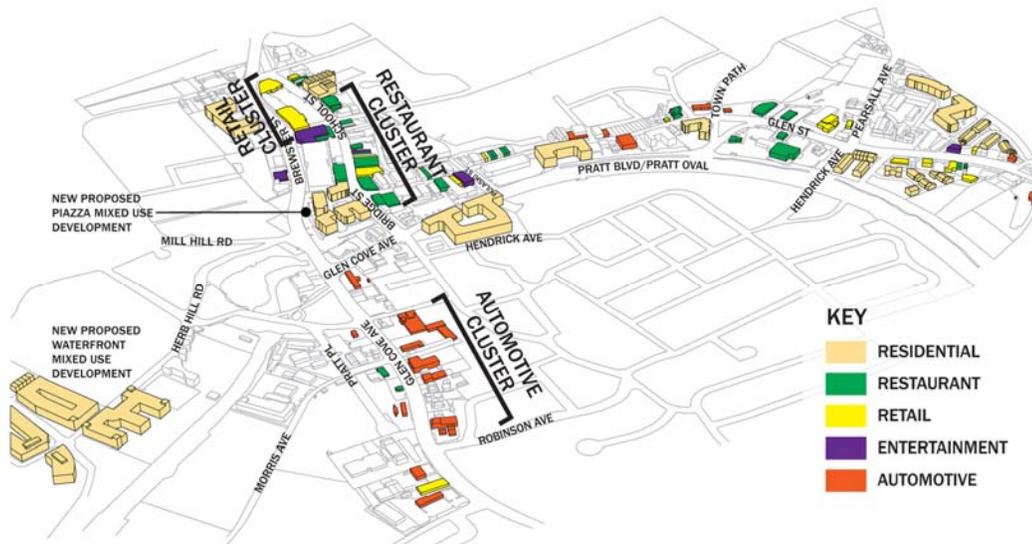


Figure 6 – Density: Types of Uses

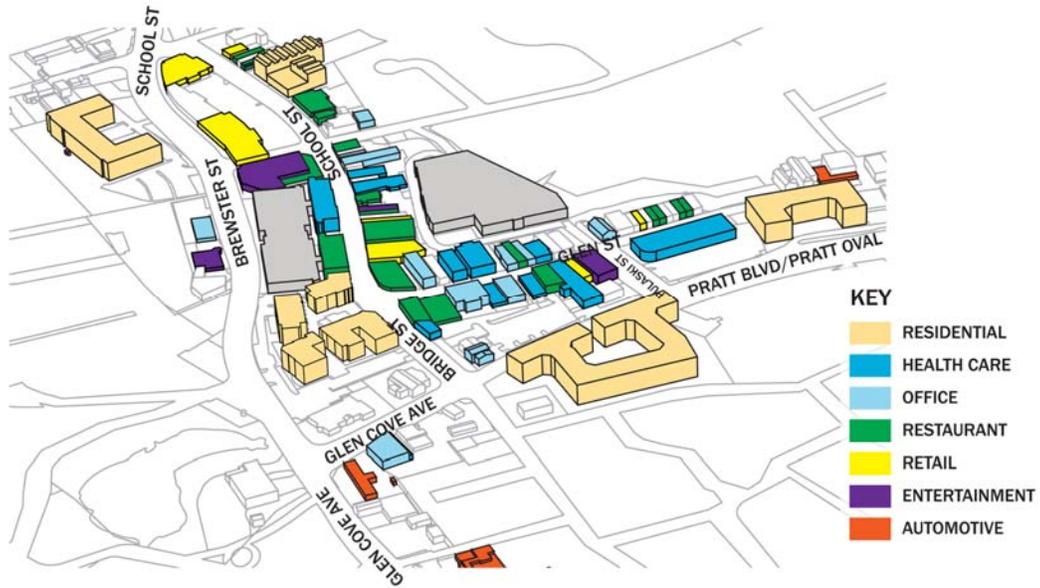


Figure 7 – Density: Types of Uses, Focused Area

The residential neighborhoods that surround downtown should make for easy access to downtown activities that are not car dependent, however, the pathways and entry points need to be more clearly delineated. Bicycle connectivity and bicycle parking should be made friendly.

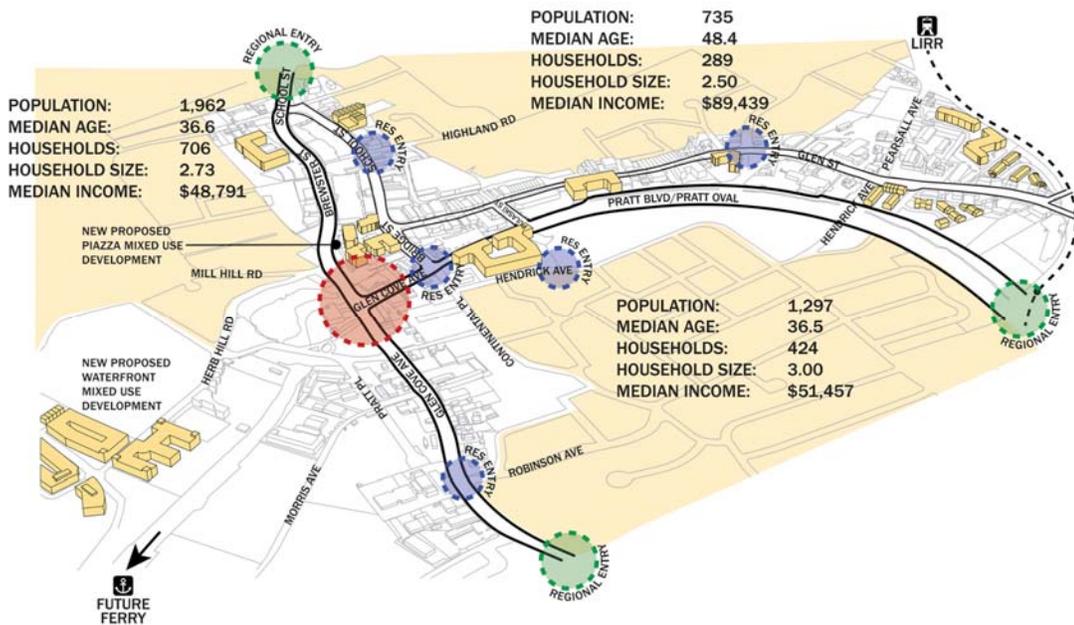


Figure 8 – Physical Conditions: Residential Connections

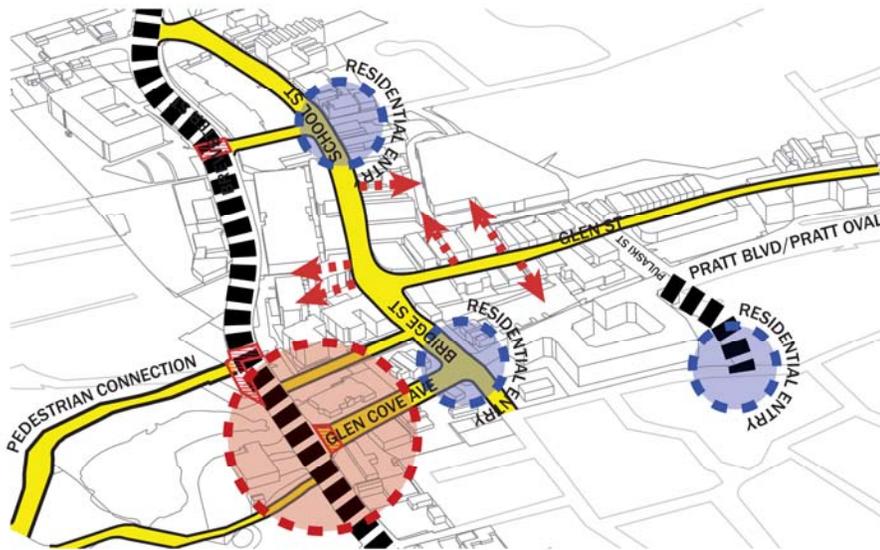


Figure 4 – Physical Conditions: Pedestrian Connections & Barriers, Focused Area

**Vacancies**

- Continued erosion of foot traffic coupled with and causing vacancies is creating a decline in downtown.

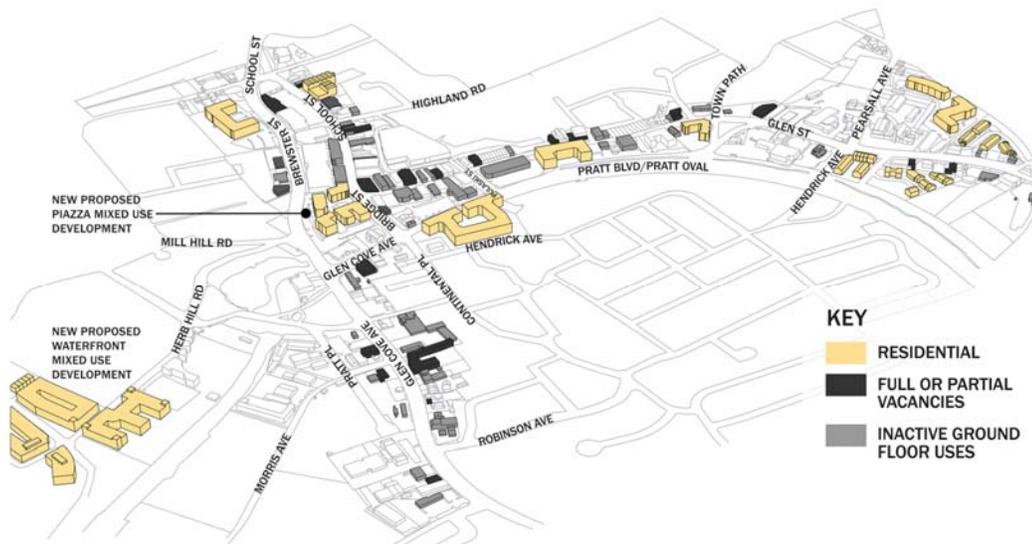


Figure 5 – Physical Conditions: Vacancies & Inactive Uses

There are vacant, underutilized, and inactive spaces throughout downtown Glen Cove and along the connections between downtown and the waterfront. Inactive spaces may include ground floor office spaces that do not generate foot traffic, stores whose windows and entrances do not face the street and non-pedestrian friendly uses such as auto shops. These uses clustered together create a significant barrier to comfortably moving from one place to another. These spaces threaten the connections between downtown retailers, as well as the connection between downtown and the waterfront.

**Movement, Barriers and Connectivity**

- A long-term issue is the coming of the new mixed use developments along the waterfront and the proposed ferry and the impact that will have on downtown;

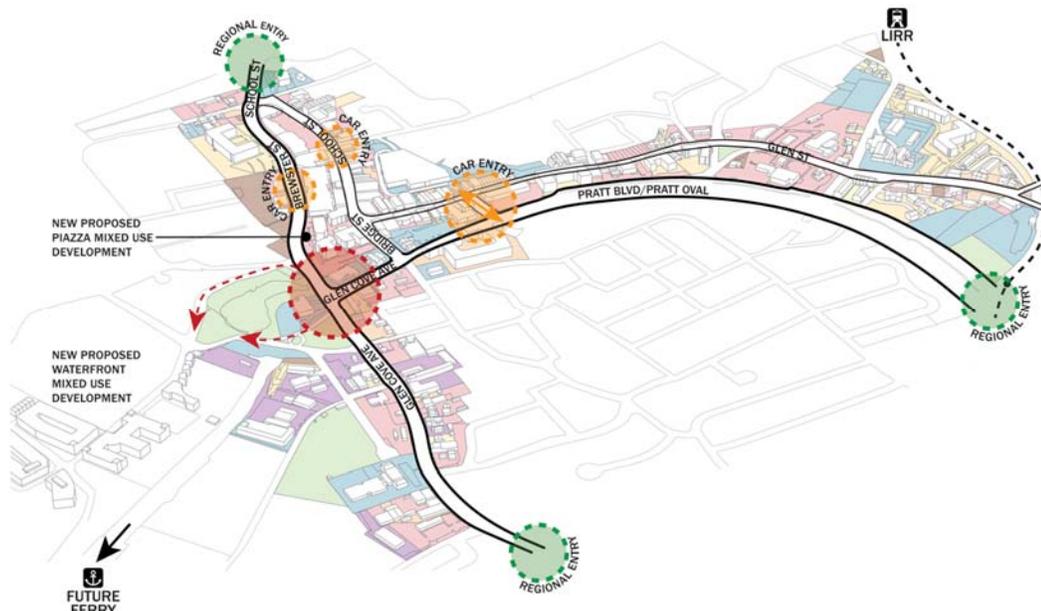


Figure 6 – Physical Conditions: Vehicular Connections

The barriers that need to be overcome in order to accomplish an effective connection between downtown and the waterfront are several:

Ideally these new developments will work with downtown in the sense of a classic mall – downtown hub on one side; waterfront hub on the other; with movement between (both vehicular and pedestrian) because there is a reason to go between the two and there are opportunities for people to interact and there is a clear path that is pleasant to move along with places of repose that will aid in the linkage.

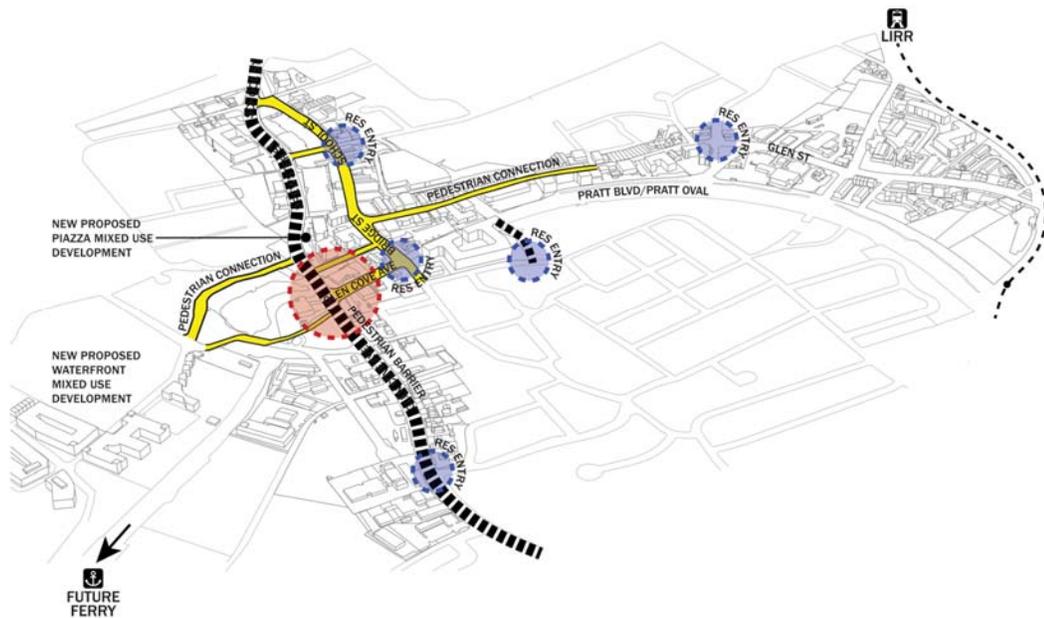


Figure 7 – Physical Conditions: Pedestrian Connections & Barriers

- Brewster Street, which forms the northern boundary of downtown Glen Cove, is the continuation of Forrest Avenue to the east (the street name changes after its intersection with School Street) and becomes Glen Cove Avenue at the intersection where the Glen Cove Fire Department is located. Brewster Street, from its intersection with Heb Hill Road through its continuation as Glen Cove Avenue separates downtown Glen Cove from Pratt Park.
- Brewster Street forms a barrier to pedestrian movement from the downtown to Pratt Park and, via Heb Hill Road to the proposed new waterfront development, due to the poor condition of the pedestrian crossings. The crosswalks are not clearly delineated and the crossing time for pedestrians is approximately 30 seconds, insufficient time for a family with young children, senior citizens and, unless you are walking fast, for most people to comfortably and safely cross the street.
- The signage along Brewster Street needs improving. It should be made clearer to motorists that they are in downtown Glen Cove. This would also include better delineation of the turning lane on Brewster Street that allows entrance to one of the public parking garages that provide access to School Street.
- The intersection of Brewster Street and Glen Cove Avenue is a vehicle-only intersection allowing an ease of connection between Brewster Street and Glen Cove Avenue and for the emergency vehicles responding to situations from the Glen Cove Fire Department located on the north side of the intersection. The vehicle-only aspect of this intersection is also a barrier to pedestrian movement, further disconnecting downtown from Pratt Park and the proposed waterfront development.

A longer term issue is the connectivity with the LIRR station. Although this is a branch line with service frequency issues, it is the major public transportation connection to New York City and other Long Island communities. Increasing residential densities and bringing buildings to the street front along Glen Street (with parking in the rear) from Pulaski Street to the station, with street level commercial and community facility uses, will over time, support a more walkable and perceivably safer pedestrian environment.

### Parking and Signage

- The perception of safety in movement from parking to School and Glen Streets.
- Signage to provide clarity for motorists and pedestrians.

The parking structures are easy to access and provide an easy connection to downtown activities. However, the perception of being unsafe in the garages and in walking through to the street discourages residents from parking there. Additionally, there is a lack of signage informing motorists where the garages are located, discouraging visitors from using them.

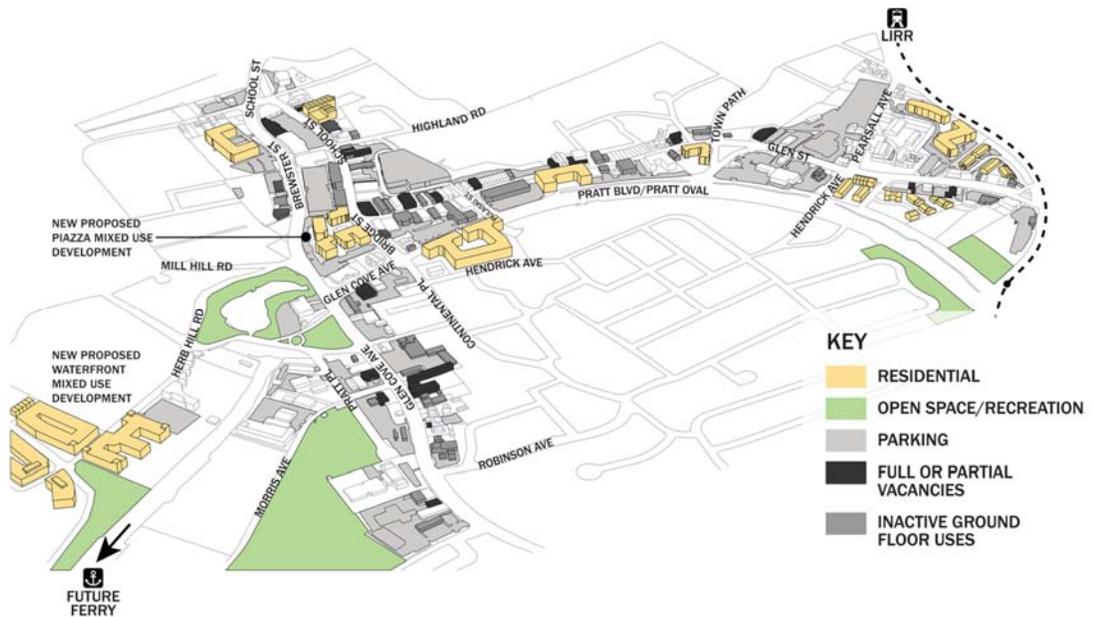


Figure 8 – Physical Conditions: Parks, Parking, Vacancies, & Inactive Uses

The parking structures, particularly the one that connects to both School Street and Glen Street, need better lighting and clearer signage to appropriate parking levels as well as to stairways. In addition, the pedestrian alleys that connect this area to both School and Glen Streets are unique elements in downtown Glen Cove and could be made to feel safer with lighting, planting, and art.

The environment surrounding the parking garages, what was once the back door to the government offices and businesses along School and Glen Streets has become another ‘front door’. Workers take their breaks back there and people who are familiar with their destinations connect to their entrances from the back. The same condition exists at the parking

lot at the back of the library (located at the intersection of Glen Cove Avenue and Brewster Street). If the area was 'softened', with better paving, lighting, and planting it will support the informal uses that are currently happening. There is space to provide bicycle parking as well as way-finding information appropriate for downtown visitors.

The parking structure that is accessible from Brewster Street is in a good position to receive automobile traffic from Glen Cove Avenue and from Forest Avenue. Its entrance and turning lanes need to be made more visible.

### **Public Space**

Public space is a critical element in the composition of active downtowns. The experience of downtown is not just shopping, eating, entertainment, and business. It is about being able to stand back and enjoy the social experience of being downtown and watching the passing parade of people and activities. Public space allows workers and shoppers to relax, to eat outdoors during good weather and supports informal meetings and conversations making downtown a more sociable place to be.

Downtown Glen Cove has a good proportion of these public spaces. There are existing public spaces along School Street particularly along the northern side of School Street, from the 'Village Square' to the Staples parking lot, including the garage access areas and the pedestrian path alongside the movie theater. Located along the south side of School Street, as well as the east side of Glen Street, the alleyways that connect to the public parking garage also function as public spaces. In addition, the parking lots, particularly at the public library and at the 'Staples shopping strip', as well as the open area behind the School Street and Glen Street buildings that connect to the public parking garage, are already functioning as places of informal meetings and conversations.

### **Land Use Recommendations**

Downtown Glen Cove has a physical infrastructure and diversified land use that is an asset and with long-term strategies of preservation (of what works), change (of what does not work), and new development that will support a distinctive marketplace, can grow downtown to a healthier economic and socially interactive place. To quote from the Glen Cove Zoning Code Article XIV Commercial Districts section 280-65.1 CBD Overlay Commercial District: "...the City Master Plan sets forth a number of recommendations for Glen Cove's downtown, including maintaining the downtown's scale and character; enriching the mixed-use character of downtown; creating an arts and entertainment district; enhancing walkability and amenities; supporting the business community's revitalization efforts;...." This can be supported by:

- A set of urban design standards (lighting, planting, awnings, signage, trash cans, shuttle bus stops) that will unify the physical core of downtown, visually unifying the two hubs – downtown and the waterfront.
- The open parking lots that front the streets need to be visually controlled and when they must remain they should be bordered by planting and low walls that define the sidewalk edge. This will give visual coherence to the street and will support safer pedestrian movement.
- Pratt Park needs to be physically better connected to downtown. Parks are the "lungs" of downtown and this one can become a more usable asset. This space will be the fulcrum between downtown and the waterfront and can become the common meeting ground between

the two hubs.

- On Glen Street, between Pulaski and the LIRR station, encourage mixed-use development with storefronts or building entrances replacing the existing parking lots along the sidewalk. This will support a safer pedestrian environment and help delineate downtown Glen Cove from the existing regional public transportation connection.
- All forms of movement need to be supported and an understanding of where the different modes take precedent – this includes automobile, pedestrian, shuttle bus, and bicycle.
- Pedestrian crosswalks need to be delineated more effectively (better visibility for both pedestrians and drivers) and at the Brewster Street pedestrians crossings the timing of the traffic lights needs to be adjusted so that pedestrians, particularly families with children and senior citizens, have more time to cross the street.
- In light of the market and consumer study, which has highlighted the strength of the Glen Cove restaurant market, in order to streamline the process, an examination of the special permitting process required for restaurants is recommended. The criteria for special use permits (section 280-21 of the Glen Cove Code) state that special use permits shall follow the same procedures as the process for site plan review. We recommend establishing a separate permitting process for restaurants, separate from site plan review, in order to simplify the review process and focus on those issues specific to restaurants. This might create two categories of restaurants – sit down dining as one category and fast food/take out as a second category.

## Methodology

The team reviewed existing documents, plans, and studies, including:

City of Glen Cove Downtown Gateway Revitalization Plan: Final Plan (Urbitran; Sept. 2008)

City of Glen Cove Study Area Map

City of Glen Cove Zoning Regulations, Article XIV, §280-65 (Central Commercial District) and §280-65.1 (Overlay Commercial District)

Nassau County GIS Base Map

Exhibit I-1 through I-25J: FEIS Plan, Glen Cove Creek Mixed-Use Waterfront Development (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin; Saccardi & Schiff; undated)

Exhibit II-PD 1 through II-PD 10; FEIS Project Description (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin; Saccardi & Schiff; undated)

Glen Cove Mixed-Use Waterfront Development Project Overview (PowerPoint presentation by RXR Glen Isle Partners, LLC, July 2, 2012)

Glen Cove Waterfront Redevelopment, 2011 Conceptual Site Plan Presentation to Planning Board (Lessard Design, Inc.; M. Paul Friedberg and Partners; RXR Glen Isle Partners, LLC; April 2011)

Glen Cove Waterfront Revitalization Overview Presentation, (Glen Cove Community Development Agency; Glen Cove Industrial Development Agency; 2011)

Master Plan for City of Glen Cove (Phillips Preiss Shapiro Associates, and Turner Miller Group; January 2009)

The support and guidance of the Mayor's Office and the Glen Cove Community Development Agency (CDA)

The observations, findings, and recommendations contained within this document were developed using the following tools:

- **Review of Existing Municipal Documents.** A thorough review was conducted of previous plans and studies, zoning and land use documents as they relate to restrictions on the downtown, waterfront, and gateways between the two.
- **Evaluation of physical conditions:** An evaluation of physical conditions and connections were conducted to determine how the infrastructure of the setting affects commerce, access, and opportunities.

- **Evaluation of Land Use:** The examination and analysis of land use within downtown Glen Cove, including the understanding of connectivity issues between downtown and the proposed new waterfront development, has been done through the lens of the market, consumer, and retail study.

NOTE: This document was prepared for the New York State Department of State with funds provided under Title II of the Environmental Protection Fund.