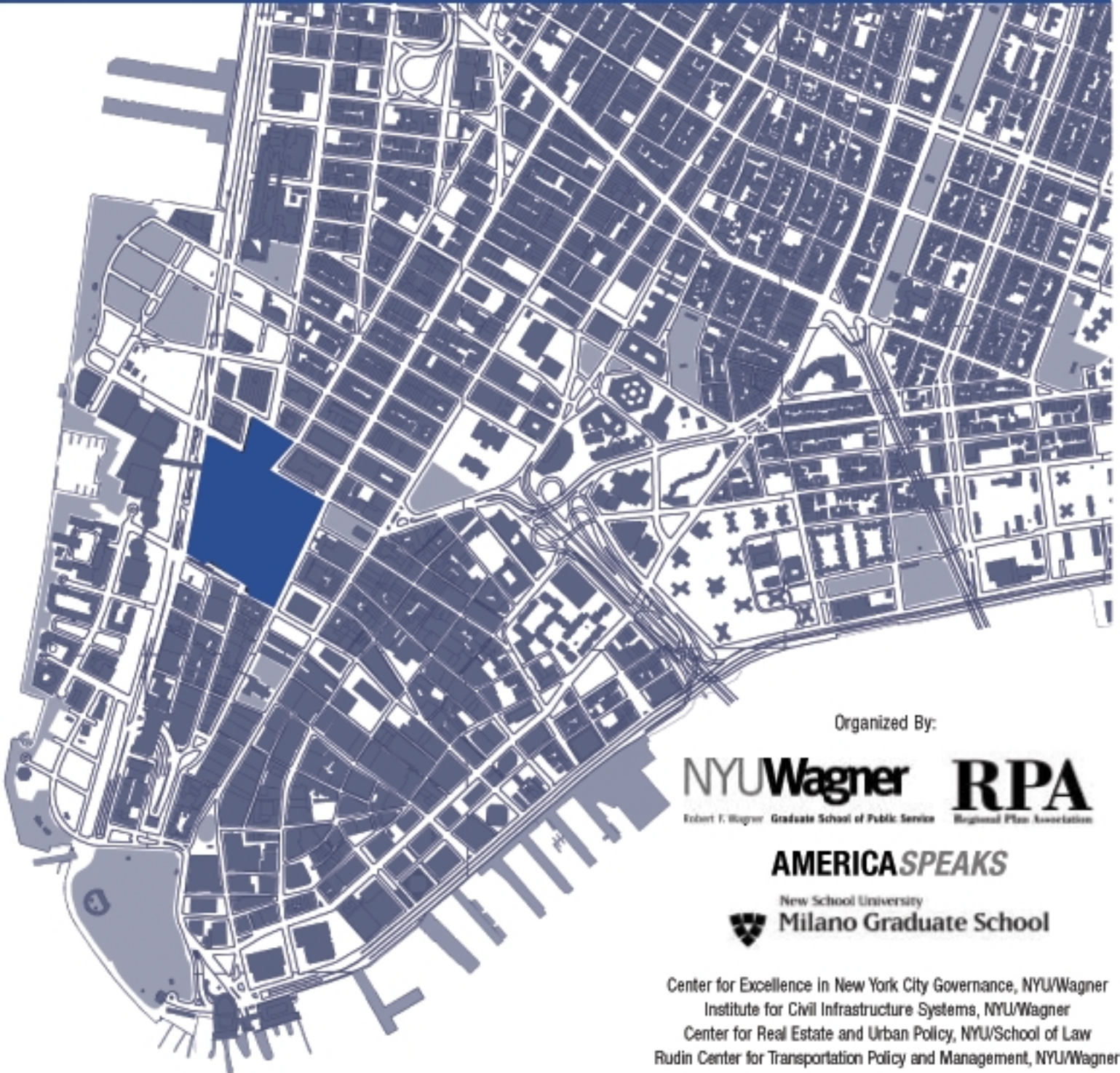


A PROJECT OF THE CIVIC ALLIANCE TO REBUILD DOWNTOWN NEW YORK

PRELIMINARY RESULTS REPORT

LISTENING TO THE CITY

FEBRUARY 7, 2002 | SOUTH STREET SEAPORT



Organized By:

NYUWagner

Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service

RPA

Regional Plan Association

AMERICASPEAKS

New School University



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Center for Excellence in New York City Governance, NYU/Wagner
Institute for Civil Infrastructure Systems, NYU/Wagner
Center for Real Estate and Urban Policy, NYU/School of Law
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Coming Together as a Region

More than 600 concerned citizens, civic leaders and public officials from throughout the metropolitan region gathered on February 7, 2002, at the South Street Seaport to chart a bold, new vision for Lower Manhattan and commemorate those who lost their lives on September 11. Over the course of the day, participants in "Listening to the City" shared with one another how the events of September 11 impacted their lives, developed a common vision for downtown, and defined what a memorial should represent.

The public conversation was attended by many of the decision makers and officials who will ultimately decide the future of Lower Manhattan, including officials from the Lower Manhattan Development Corporation, the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, New York State, and the New York City Mayor's office and city council. These preliminary results, as well as a final report, will be presented to these decision-makers to guide their work.

"Listening to the City" is a project of the Civic Alliance to Rebuild Downtown New York, a broad-based coalition of nearly 100 civic, business, environmental, community, university, and labor groups committed to devising strategies for the redevelopment of Lower Manhattan. It has been convened by the Regional Plan Association in conjunction with New York University, New School University, and the Pratt Institute. The event was designed and facilitated by AmericaSpeaks.

Demographics

Participants in the forum came from all walks of life and represented the rich geographic, racial and income diversity of the metropolitan region. These figures are compared with the region's figures.

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Region</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Room</u>	<u>Region</u>
Female	55%	52%	African American	8%	20%
Male	45%	48%	Asian/Pacific Islander	11%	9%
			Caucasian	71%	64%
<u>Age</u>			Native American	0%	<1%
19 or under	2%	27%	Mixed Race	4%	2%
20-34	19%	22%	Other Race	5%	9%
35-54	50%	30%			
55-64	20%	9%	<u>Geography</u>		
65 or better	9%	12%	Manhattan	52%	9%
			Brooklyn	18%	14%
<u>Household Income</u>			Bronx	2%	8%
\$0 - \$24,999	9%	26%	Queens	8%	13%
\$25,000 - \$49,999	16%	25%	Staten Island	2%	3%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	16%	18%	Elsewhere in NYS	8%	30%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	14%	12%	New Jersey	8%	23%
Over \$100,000	45%	19%	Elsewhere in US	1%	n/a
<u>Ethnicity</u>					
Hispanic	6%	21%			
Non-Hispanic	94%	79%			

Demographics, cont.

The Civic Alliance aspired to have the room today represent the region demographically, and it is evident that we accomplished that goal better on some variables than others. For example, the gender balance in the room was similar to the region's mix. On the other hand, while participants from middle income bands were in proportion to the region's population, the room included fewer low-income and more high-income citizens than is representative of the area. Similarly, the participants included more Caucasians and fewer African-Americans than would be expected in a representative room. The Civic Alliance will continue to address the issue of ensuring that all voices are in the room in future events.

Forum participants related to the events of September 11 and the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan in a variety of capacities. Each participant was asked to identify all of the descriptors that they felt described themselves. The results were as follows:

- 4.7%** had family members killed on 9/11
- 16.3%** were survivors of the events of 9/11
- 25.0%** were at or very near Ground Zero on 9/11
- 4.5%** were rescue workers
- 19.6%** are or were residents of Lower Manhattan
- 39.6%** work or worked in Lower Manhattan
- 52.8%** represent planning/architectural/ building/government community
- 59.9%** were other interested citizens

Getting Connected

After a brief discussion on the significance to participants of the mix of citizens in the room, the day turned to an exercise intended to set a deep, safe space for the remainder of the day's work. This discussion centered around a sharing of the impact of September 11 on participants themselves, on their families, and on the City of New York.

Major Rebuilding Issues

In a discussion of the key issues to be addressed the rebuilding of Lower Manhattan, several themes emerged. Among the strongest were:

- The importance of balancing the tensions between residential and office uses, between financial jobs and a broader economic base, and between a sense of urgency and the need for deliberative planning;
- The fact that rebuilding is about human needs as well as real estate. Participants specifically referenced job training, safety and security, and environmental quality as examples of this issue;
- The opportunity to improve transportation, infrastructure, and connectedness;

- The critical nature of the memorial; and
- The need to think broadly to include all people, all parts of the region, all uses, and future generations.

Common Elements of a Vision for the Future

The redevelopment of Lower Manhattan demands a vision for the future that recognizes its history, its geography, its status as a world financial capital, and the people who live and work here. Forum participants were charged with developing a shared vision that would inspire the city to greatness and drive the redevelopment process.

Participants were asked to describe their vision for what Lower Manhattan would be like in 2012 if it had been rebuilt in the best possible way. Participants had in-depth discussions at their tables about the elements of their visions. The ideas generated out of these discussions were submitted from each table through a groupware computer network to a team of staff tasked with identifying the strongest themes from the discussions.

Eight themes were identified from the numerous aspects of the vision that were submitted via the laptops from the tables. (The full set of comments submitted is preserved as part of the record of the day.) Participants discussed these themes, and then were each asked to identify the three most important vision elements. The themes of the discussion, ranked to reflect **their relative importance**, were:

- Vibrant, 24-hour mixed use community – increase the diversity of commercial, residential, cultural and recreational uses (22% rated this among the top three elements)
- Seamless transportation hub – all types of transportation (underground, surface, ferries), linking all parts of region (18%)
- Memorial should be integrated into total picture (16%)
- Intimate open space with lots of trees, where people of all ages can congregate and play; active waterfront (13%)
- Incorporate affordable housing (13%)
- Unique identity; classy and aesthetic; "inspirational"; "green buildings"; respecting the history; human scale (10%)
- Restore the street grid – connect surrounding areas and waterfront (5%)
- “Most visited place on earth”(3%)

Participants were then asked to rank **the relative likelihood of the individual vision elements to be realized**. The results of that polling are a good-news story -- participants believe that the elements that are most important are also most likely to be realized:

- Memorial should be integrated into total picture (29%)
- Seamless transportation hub – all types of transportation (underground, surface, ferries), linking all parts of region (19%)
- Vibrant, 24-hour mixed use community -- increase the diversity of commercial, residential, cultural and recreational uses (17%)
- Restore the street grid – connect surrounding areas and waterfront (11%)
- Intimate open space with lots of trees, where people of all ages can congregate and play; active waterfront (7%)
- “Most visited place on earth” (7%)
- Unique identity; classy and aesthetic; “inspirational”; “green buildings”; respecting the history; human scale (7%)
- Incorporate affordable housing (2%)

The theme team also captured some of the ideas that certain individuals felt strongly about, but which were *not* shared by the tablemates of those holding the idea:

- Rebuild skyline - a tall building to restore the "exclamation point" of New York!
- Entire site should be a memorial park - "footprints are sacred ground."
- Icon of tolerance and diversity
- Protect and integrate Chinatown
- Need for athletic facilities, possibly an Olympic stadium for 2012
- Alternative transportation - bikes, monorails, trolleys

Defining a Memorial

Forum participants began the process of defining a September 11 memorial by reviewing images of memorials that had been created to commemorate historic tragedies around the world, as well as memorials that have sprung up around the country in response to September 11. In order to begin the process of developing a memorial, participants were asked to answer the following questions:

For whom do we want to create the memorial?

What is the essence of what we want to honor, remember and memorialize?

Participants made strong and consistent statements answering for whom they want to create the memorial:

- For all of us
- For every person who died
- For their families
- For the rescuers
- For all New Yorkers
- For all Americans
- For the entire world
- For future generations: "our kids and our kids' kids"
- For our values

The submissions concerning the essence of what participants want to honor, remember, and memorialize also displayed consistent themes:

- Remembrance: a sacred place to mourn; place for healing
- Honor the heroism, sacrifice, selfless spirit, unity, and resiliency
- Values that were attached: freedom, tolerance and diversity, democratic ideals
- Magnitude of what happened, lost innocence, global impact
- Honoring the "everyday people" that died and their individuality -- include all names
- Allows reflection, sharing of stories

Participants were also given an opportunity to share ideas for what the memorial should actually be. The discussions acknowledged that the process has not developed far enough to determine what the memorial should look like, but the ideas were surfaced to seed future discussions.

Final Report

These preliminary results of the February 7, 2002 "Listening to the City" discussion will be supplemented by a final report. That document will be published on the Civic Alliance's web site:

<http://www.civic-alliance.org>

The report will be made available before the end of February.