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Routes To the Renaissance for Pittsfield, MA

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APPENDIX I: ASSET MAPPING WORKSHOP

On October 8, 2015, Shire City Consulting hosted an asset mapping workshop at Pittsfield City Hall. The main purpose of this workshop was to engage with members of the community as well as town officials in order to reveal which parts of Shire City Consulting's scope of work were most highly valued and which were considered high priorities by Pittsfield residents. Participants were divided into five groups, each of which were given a large map of either one of Pittsfield's gateways (Route 20 West Housatonic Street, Route 9, and Route 20 South Street), the downtown corridor, or the Tyler Street corridor. The maps rotated between tables at eight-minute intervals, so that all the participants had a chance to give input on all of Shire City Consulting's focus areas.

A technique known as "dot voting" was used to record the opinions of the participants at each table. Participants were given green, orange, and red dots, and instructed to mark places they saw as assets with green dots, places they saw as transitional areas with orange dots, and places in need of improvement with red dots. They were also given Post-It notes and encouraged to place written notes directly on the map. Volunteer note-takers at each table recorded the major points discussed by each group in order to improve Shire City Consulting's later analysis of the workshop findings.

After this portion of the exercise, all the workshop participants gathered around each map in turn and collaborated to identify several high-priority areas for Shire City Consulting to focus on in each focus area, and mark them with blue dots. From the results of this workshop, Shire City Consulting was able to gather useful information about the attitudes and feelings of Pittsfield residents and officials. This data helped to inform Shire City Consulting's process when conducting initial research and site visits and beginning to form recommendations.

The following list presents a compilation of the comments and priorities regarding the five maps:

RT. 20 (WEST HOUSATONIC ST.)

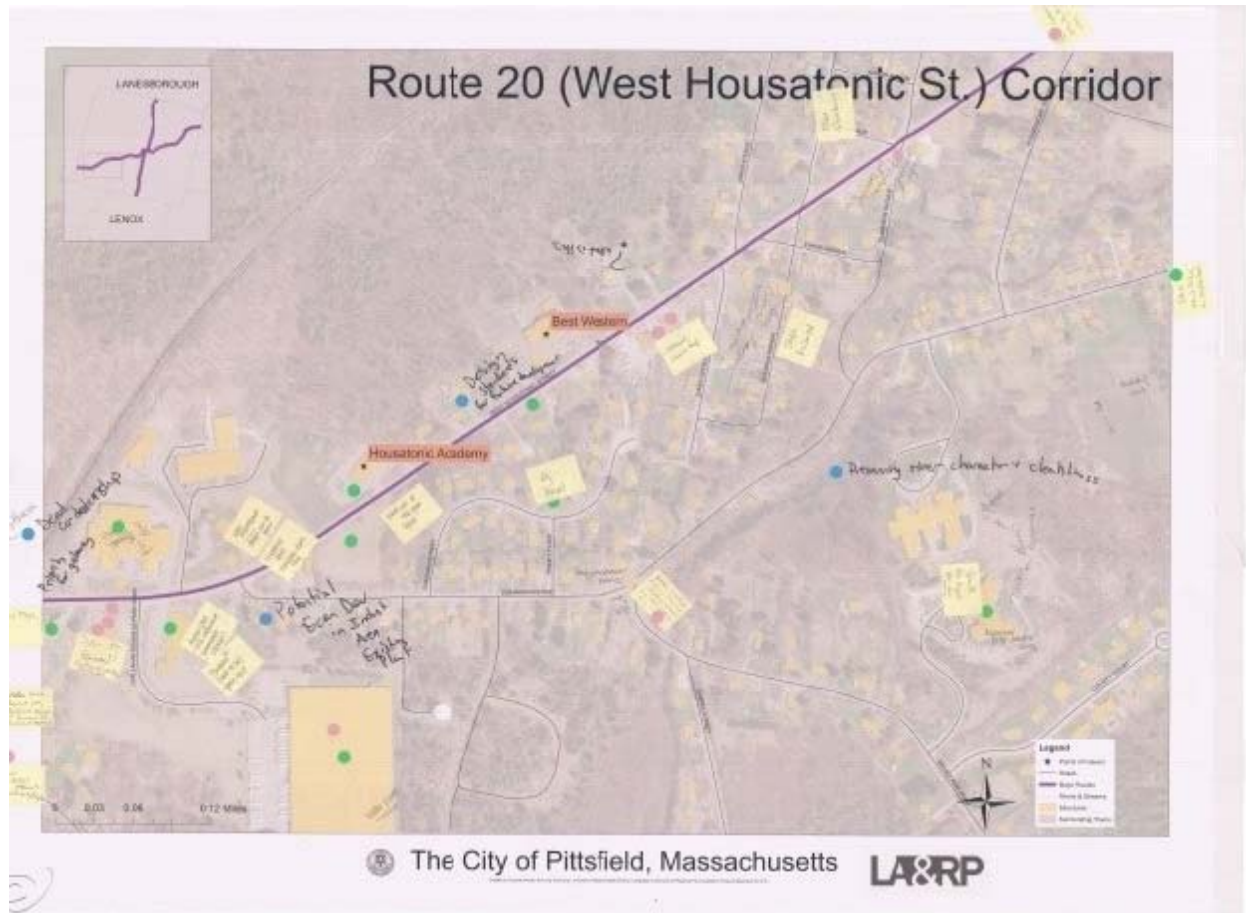


Figure 1: Rt 20 (West Housatonic St) asset mapping workshop map with comments

COMMENTS

- Need more markers for user orientation
- Enjoy the open space at academy for children
- U-Haul aesthetically displeasing
- Industrial Area - well-maintained but not ideal
- Berkshire fence looks like “a dump”
- Need for clear cutting
- Objects piled in front of certain stores
- Housatonic Academy, a school for at risk youth
- There’s a Dollar General -- cookie cutter
- Lot of stores in Pittsfield
- Lot of these places need “greening” to soften their front look of asphalt
- Callahan Business Park Rd. -- really industrial

- Weird mix of residential -- used to be a mill
- Open space by assisted living -- appropriate for rural area
- Small strip mall by Clarkson Ave -- all commercially-zoned properties
- If coming in this Route It looks like it grew in a very unplanned manner
- Doggie Day Care is great
- Well maintained, scenic
- Melbourne and Lebanon intersection (heading south on Lebanon) is on a hill, tough intersection, have to be real careful
- Abandoned car dealership
- Sides of road poorly lit, overgrow
- A few roads are nice
- Off the map-abandoned shopping center across from McDonalds in gross condition (closer to center of town)
- Industrial Park with Plastic molding company is good
- Sterns Park is good
- Melbourne Place - first assisted living place since the zoning ordinance passed (positive growth/development)
- Property across from McDonalds is vacant needs commercial development
- Many proposed projects never happened
- Bad intersections, acute angles are not good
- Schools are good for neighborhoods
- Many older buildings but overall stable residential
- A lot of houses/buildings were built between the '30s and '60s and are difficult to maintain

PRIORITIES

- Car dealership area
 - Develop design standards for future development
- Priority for gateway corridor
- Preserve green space/river
- Industrial area
 - Potential economic development

TYLER STREET

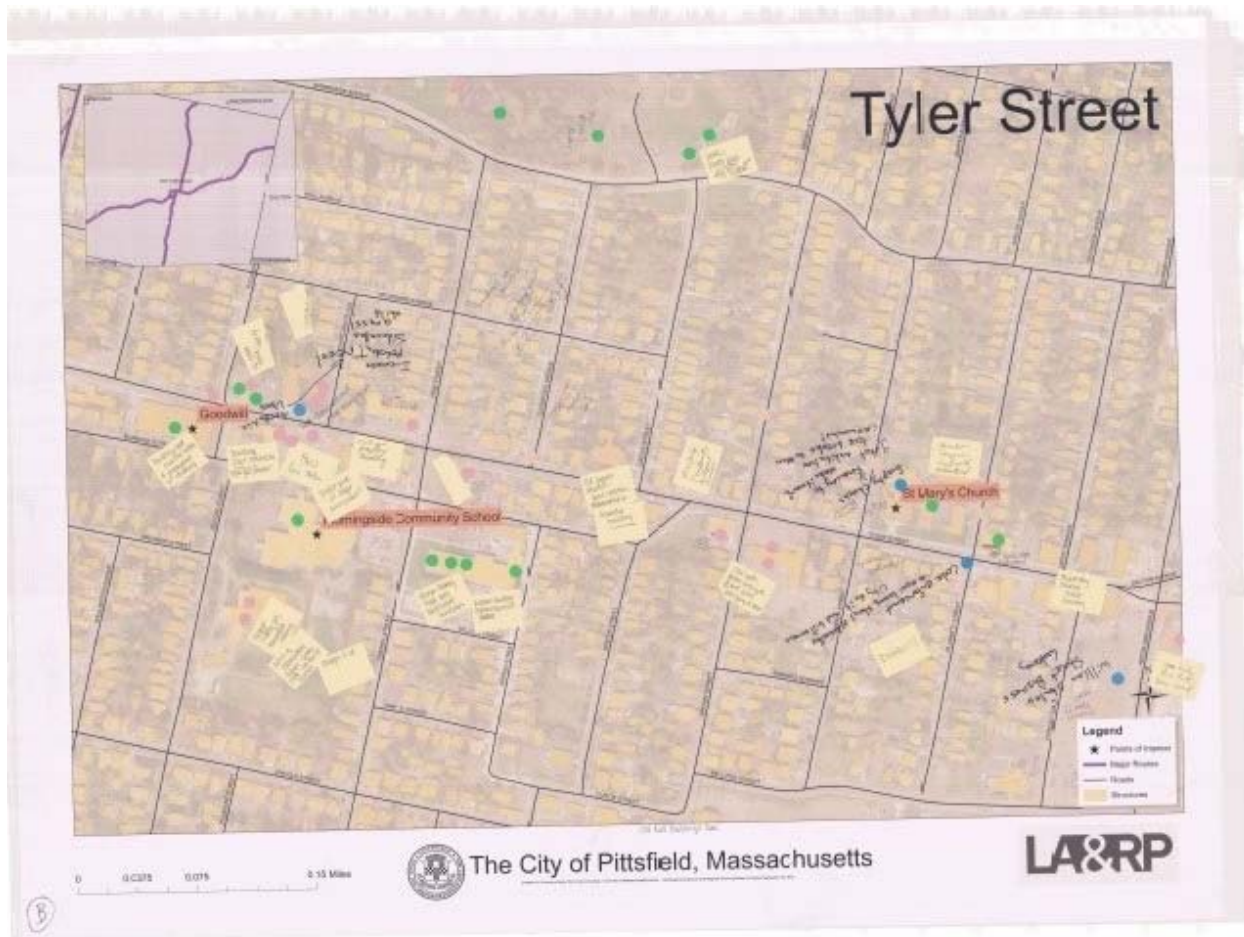


Figure 2: Tyler St asset mapping workshop map with comments

COMMENTS

- “Don’t know where to start”
- Abandoned factory remodeled in apartments – good reuse of historic building
- Old abandoned GE building need to be knocked down or filled with new business
- Ice cream shop is “just bad” and surrounded by pavement
- St Mary’s Church is a lovely building but vacant
- Vacant buildings
- Hess gas station area - “Just knock it down”
- No historic building conservation conversation
- Church’s decommissioned for reuse and people are up in arms
- Fire station for sale, waiting for something to happen

- St. Mary's- understand need to preserve, annoyance with people not understanding or taking action sooner
- Old theater is a wreck in the back of the building
- Old jail redone to new traditional jail
- St. Mary's church should be taken down, but it won't be
- Very diverse! African American, Indian family, Egyptian, Chinese
- Lots of rental units -- low income
- Tyler St. is not very walkable
- Big spaces between businesses
- Mill used to be apartments -- like how it was reused
- Tyler Street zoned commercial
- Converted duplexes -- potential for retail
- Smaller rents (2nd tier commercial)
- Lot of vacant properties between Goodwill & Morningside
- Asset is the ice cream shop
- Biggest problem is when you have to drive across street
- Maybe install a parking garage
- Public transit is "rotten"
- Major Artery
- A lot of money invested in some area and not in others
- Money needs to be available to help certain areas
- Low-income housing not always treated or maintained well
- St. Mary's replaced with Dunkin Donuts would be sad
- A lot of buildings in transition, a forgotten area
- Liquor store is nice
- Zenners needs a big red dot, police watch but nothing done, unsafe, not kept up
- Area has a lot of empty buildings
- "This poor street"
- Dangerous issue=gentrification, community being shoved, not embraced
- Vacant lots, dirt patches, Dalton Ave/Woodlawn
- Crime concern (more than North Street), forgotten area
- So many gorgeous houses. Side streets bumpy, hard to drive on, need maintenance, no curb appeal, plain storefronts
- Crime Hess gas station
- Biggest Park is gorgeous

PRIORITIES

- Code enforcement

- People don't mow/shovel
 - Give citations
- What's the point of having an empty church
 - Want creative redevelopment
 - Tax Breaks? Housing?
 - Contaminated
 - Going to sit there and do nothing
- Goodwill Area
 - Aesthetics and uses need work
 - Increase pedestrian access
 - Sidewalks are a mess
- Can't travel on Tyler Street with children and strollers

RT. 9 (DALTON AVE/MERRILL RD/CHESHIRE RD)

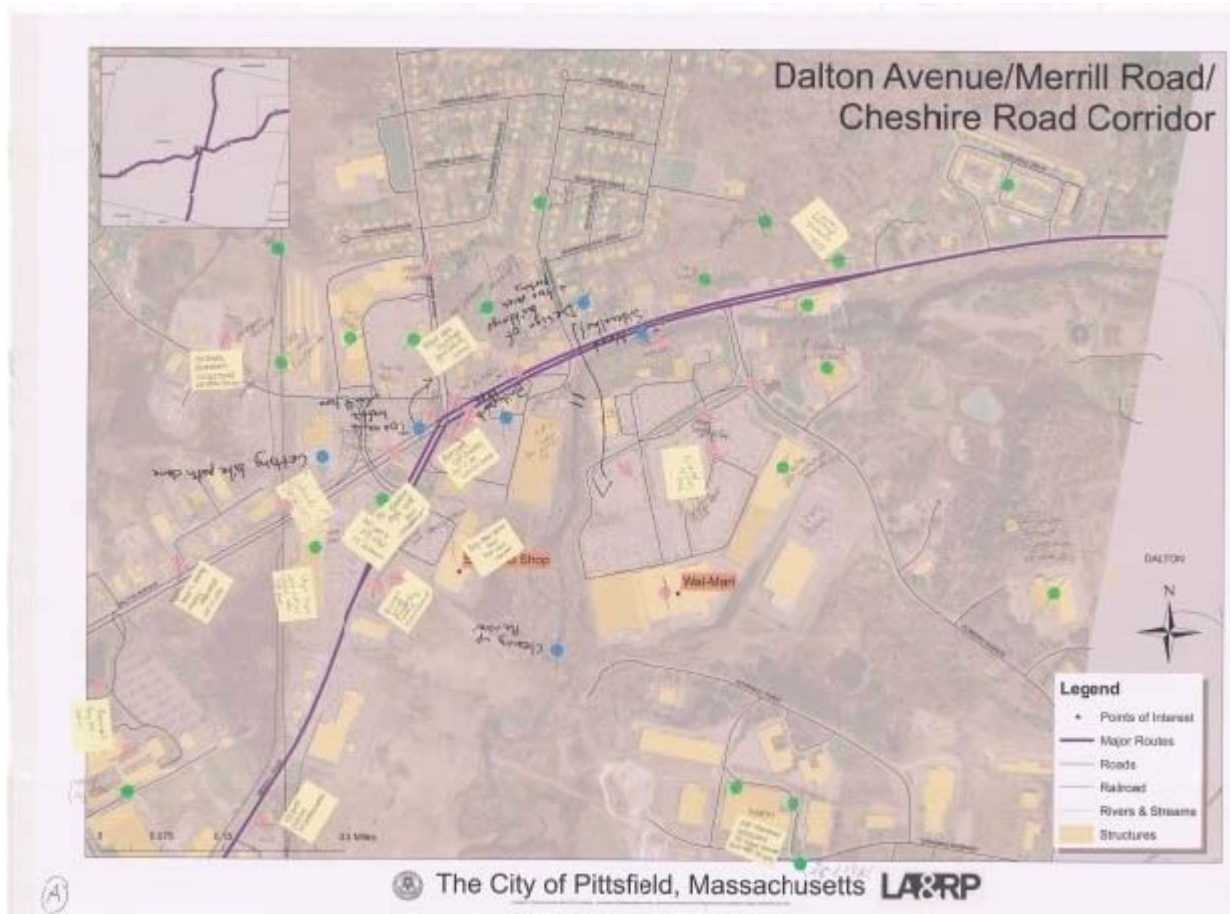


Figure 3: Rt 9 (Dalton Ave/Merrill Rd/Cheshire Rd) asset mapping workshop map with comments

COMMENTS

- AutoZone looks awful and you can't see around corner
- "This area [burger king, AutoZone] is why we need this project"
- Generally up keep is poor on Merrill Road and Dalton
- Prefer consolidate industrial space
- Love market 32!
- If you're going to introduce new industry/business they need style
- Area that originally started killing downtown
- Busiest intersection in the county
- Pedestrian friendliness is non-existent with no sidewalks on the goat path
- BJs cheap!

- Bridge over the river good idea for people to access to connect residential and commercial
- Solar Gas
- Bike trail extension (Crane Ave - Williams - will be tricky w/ multiple property owners)
- Sabic (where GE used to be) -> immediate fallout, loss of jobs
- Underutilized park, West Memorial, could be better utilized and should have better connection
- Hopeful GE becomes redevelopment area (larger extent of campus)
- GE owns General Dynamics
- Don't like Walmart and ShopRite because of poor treatment and lack of physical look
- Market 32 made beautiful shop
- Need buffer between street and buildings and to encourage back lot connections
- There are saplings, small strips of trees
- Tractor trailers park in underutilized in front of Walmart
- Tree belt soften the asphalt -- consider it!
- Parking requirements is way more than what store need even during Black Friday or Christmas
- If there were sidewalks, we'd more were willing to walk
- Putting in access for hiking (National Resource & Health)
- Maybe laws that wouldn't allow this mess!
- Guard rail, goat path very unsafe
- Cheshire Road Traffic congestions, very dangerous
- Route 8/9 intersection is a nightmare, especially if first time driving it
- Dicks/Panera/TSC very good
- Allendale shops stay full, good business turnover, entrance. They became "crazy and grubby"
- Traffic islands are not maintained, who is responsible, not good image for the city, bridge is not maintained and not pretty
- Walmart parking lot is "worst in the world", confusing missing stop signs and potholes, poor traffic flow
- Bike trail extension is good
- SABIC Plastics Announced they are leaving Pittsfield
- Open Land Owned by craning

PRIORITIES

- "Goat path" (walkability)
 - Getting the bike path done
 - Bridge/entry unwelcoming

- Traffic from every direction
- Route 8 north difficult for those that live there due to traffic/congestion
- Improve design standards

DOWNTOWN

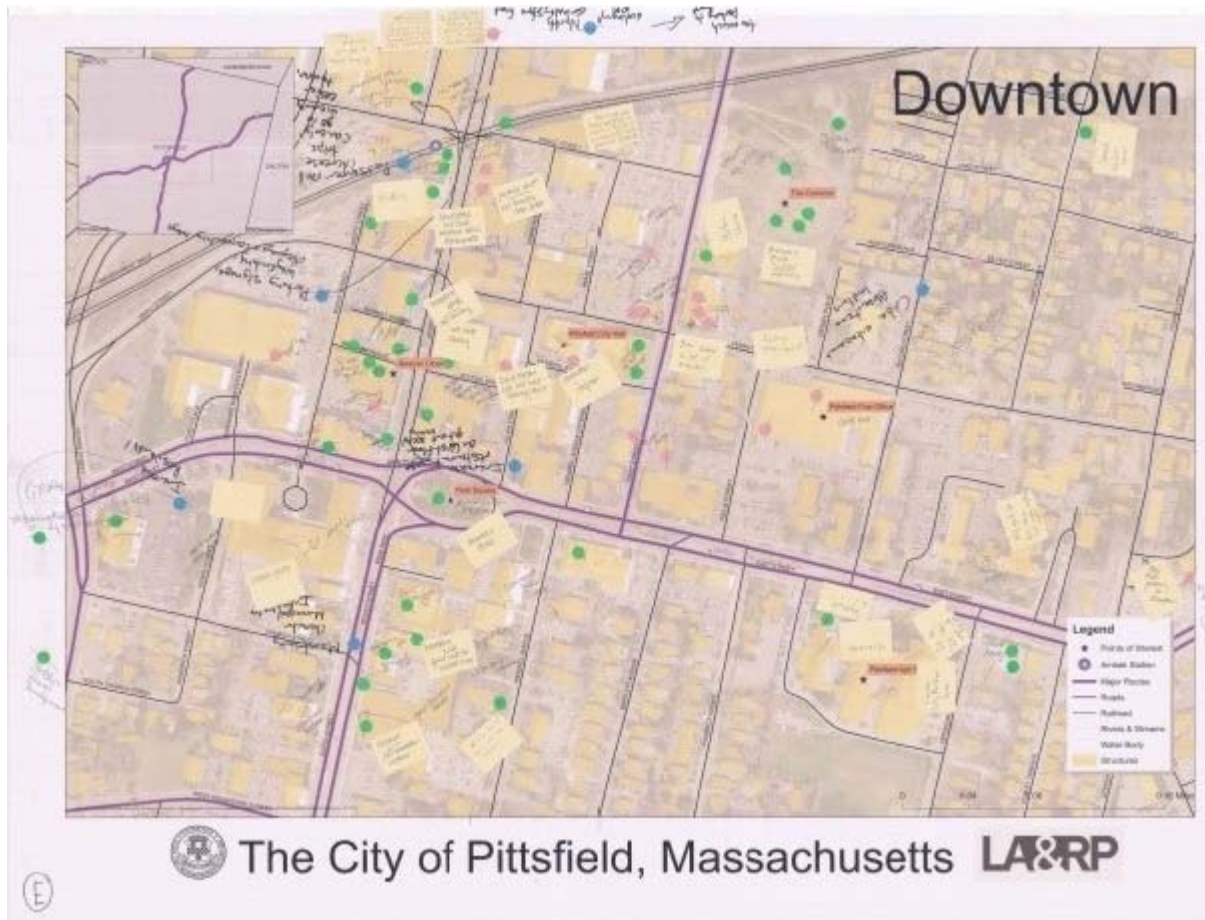


Figure 4: Downtown asset mapping workshop map with comments

COMMENTS

- Park square is beautiful
- Entry into Pitts is beautiful
- Best liquor store in Berkshires
- Plastic company next to pearls street is bad
- Lot needs maintenance
- Ice cream place needs to be taken down
- Lot has a lot of remodeling potential
- Crown plaza, needs renovation
- Too much access parking when other areas downtown need parking
- Beacon Cinema is great
- North Street needs more retail

- Not friendly
- Masonic lodge is abandoned and needs development
- Upper North street – needs help
- Post offices are a nightmare – parking, traffic accessibility
- City Hall during day-hard to find parking, not accessible. North Street offices are not center of city
- Cinema is good
- Dunkin Donuts and Burger King have no connection with the city, no cleaning/maintenance with property
- Parking and signage near King Cone/signage need to be upgraded
- Parking garage inaccessible, restricted spots
- Allen Building could be gorgeous, rehab fell through, would love to see improvements
- Park real nice, walkable
- South Street plants-nobody maintains (center of street)
- Park redeveloped cost \$3.5 million, good buzz for downtown
- Big Y was going to move, but stayed and spent money to make it nice
 - Nearby neighborhoods have good important walkable access
- TD bank does not use all of its building
- Berkshire Carousel, needs to be embraced
- Not most pedestrian friendly area
- Lots of good bars/social gathering space
- Don't need things like a juvenile court in storefront area, not friendly (Columbus St.)
- Clapp House; Berkshire Theater Group reusing/redeveloping as housing
- County looking at train to NYC, passenger rail, very good
- Code enforcement and absentee landlords in the Morningside neighborhood
- Need quality safe affordable housing
- Common - Like the formalized green space. At the same time, area of activity; inviting to a number of people in city, not just a playground.
- New Arts Center - 20 artist residents is a positive point of interest in the area.
- “Pocket” park by North St. is not really green space
- High School needs renovation or reuse for something as it is not entirely functional.
- High school is beautiful but renovated in the 70s. Kind of like a big box in back of dead space. It is kind of emblematic when you think of downtown but there is a lot missing for today's youth.
- Empty lot used for hand car wash on Fenn Street is an opportunity for mixed development, commercial/parking.
- Historic Church next to Dunkin Donuts site is an asset
- Theater and Museum are assets

- A lot of positive things about downtown
- Samuel Harrison House is an asset
- Pittsfield High brings good activity downtown and is in its “second life.” Its third life should bring municipal offices there and move high school elsewhere
- Parking Deck is great but needs to be redone/repaired

PRIORITIES

- Parking! (Confusing signage)
 - Accessibility
 - Continue push for downtown residential
- Empty store fronts
- People loitering is bad
- Maintain all streetscapes and greenery
- Protect investments
- Retail (First Floor)> Social Services (Second Floor)
- Promote people (walkability)
- Passenger rail!
 - Travel times are difficult to adjust to
 - Easier to drive

RT. 20 (SOUTH ST.)



Figure 5: Rt 20 (South St) asset mapping workshop map with comments

COMMENTS

- New Holiday Inn Express
- Like the flower shop and the way it looks
- Mazzeo's is a plus
- Good food

- Nice Parking lot
- Hilton Hotel
- Dangerous
- Don't like the Access
- Curb cut nightmare
- Big hotel no has been in for a long time
- "Everyone loves Guidos" (high end and accessible for all)
- Stop & Shop not that crowded and easy
- Another smaller hotel
- Have plenty of big box stores
- Secluded, empty behind trees
- Going North St traffic starts slowing to a crawl (starts midpoint on the map)
- Dan Fox Drive was supposed to connect to highway but never did
- Mazzeo's family restaurant much better location here for business
- Good to have big box next to boutique stores
- Building hotel next to Stop & Shop. 5 news hotels in block in past 3 years
- Whole thing is dreary automobile section
- Very commercial
- All business are very separate to get to, not many connections between stores
- Like the green space "sense"
- Most people think Pittsfield is at bottom of hill
- Looks pretty
- Conservation land there
- First part from South St. to about North St. need to protect
- Berkshire County Club & golf
- 3 gas stations, restaurant with giant parking lot
- High traffic & speed area
- Very automotive
- Maybe screening?
- Flowers & landscape soften the effects of the asphalt on Rt. 20
- Restricting number of curb cuts
- Joint curb zoning
- Transition -- greening the asphalt
- It's established as standard destination for big box shopping
- Maybe do something different with architecture
- Green space is nice
- Lack of sidewalks on South Street

- Building behind flower shop, jerks. Built, people stayed with viewing condos. Once condos sold...empty waste of building
- Near Guidos not walkable-especially if getting car fixed across street
- Perfectly fine stop and shop
- Need more streetscaping along South Street
- Not good to bike (even with bike lanes)
- Need Signage along road
- Access control issues near restaurant and Dunkin Donuts
- Parking lot issues
- Old motels near Lenox are cluttering
- Dan Fox - land can be developed
- Environmental constraints
- Condominiums (near legend on map)
- Positive Development

PRIORITIES

- Entry to Lenox not special/welcoming
- Corridor Management Implementation
- Fewer accidents
- Reduce Curb cuts
- Not pedestrian friendly
- Could use sidewalks and trees
- Typical commercial strip
- Maintain green space
- Beautiful walk but unkempt
- Need bike lanes