

Team Notes from 11/15/03 DCP Downtown Design Workshop
Section 1 - Academy Street to South Street

Downtown Wilkes-Barre between Academy and South Streets is composed of the strongly defined (and sometimes strongly segregated) residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial corridors of River, Franklin, and Main Streets and Pennsylvania Ave. between the River Common and the former Hazard Wire Rope Works complex.

By introducing various new infill buildings, renovations, and green spaces, our team felt that improvements at key locations could spark interaction between resident, student, and out-of-town visitor populations.

Some specific ideas proposed were:

- 1) Wilkes University – Replace the parking lot behind the Student Union with a new green quadrangle, a 3 story parking structure, and infill housing units along Franklin Street.
- 2) S. Main St. below South St. – Enhance an existing “restaurant row” with new infill restaurants, with upper level apartments. Provide a lighted greenway at mid-block from S. Main St. to S. Franklin to connect businesses, the new Wilkes U. quadrangle, the Call Center, Verizon offices, and the Federal Courthouse and an additional parking structure (with street-level shops) on S. Main St.
- 3) S. Main St. below Ross St. – Eliminate the sprawling post office and chain drug stores. Build a new Main Post Office and a pleasant, urban food mart serving downtown residents, businesses and the college population. Place new office buildings along Pennsylvania Blvd.
- 4) Hazard Wire Rope Complex – Adapt and re-use the dilapidated parts of the Hazard Complex for antique stores, art galleries, other small businesses, loft apartments, and a black box theatre. Retain existing businesses and nightclub. Build a new amphitheatre for outdoor concerts adjacent to an enlarged farmer’s market and outdoor municipal ice rink.
- 5) S. River St. – Renovate the old Brown’s Deli as a Starbucks or similar establishment with outdoor café and apartments upstairs. At Academy St., demolish the dilapidated corner buildings and rebuild “gateway” apartment buildings.
- 6) Riverfront – Provide river overlooks along the dike at the River Common and on W. River St.
- 7) Housing – Preserve existing housing districts and add infill housing and street trees.